



## DOCTOR OF EDUCATION (EDD)

### **Addressing the Social Exclusion of Children from Primary Education: Country Analyses of India and Mozambique**

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**Addressing the Social Exclusion of Children from Primary Education:  
Country Analyses of India and Mozambique**

**By**

**Robert Jenkins**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

University of Bath  
Department of Education

July 2009

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## **Abstract**

This thesis focuses on the social exclusion of children of primary school age in India and Mozambique by examining two related aspects: the policies that have been adopted in both countries to tackle social exclusion and the indicators they have used to identify it. It is argued that existing policy indicators in both countries can provide a partial answer to the question of how far they have been able to address social exclusion but that indicators and analyses need to be more fine grained both to monitor social exclusion and provide leads as to how it can better addressed.

The purpose is not to compare the two country analyses in order to evaluate how they differ in terms of magnitude or severity in the form of the exclusion. Rather, it is to understand the diverse nature of exclusion, and the different remedies and analyses that are required in the two countries. This analysis suggests that one size fits all policies, as once suggested by the World Bank, are inappropriate.

The thesis develops an understanding of the concept of social exclusion and contrasts it with previous accounts of poverty in countries like India and Mozambique. It also adopts a normative Human Rights approach in viewing primary schooling as crucial to questions of social exclusion. It also shows how these key concepts can be related.

Through the two country analyses offered in this thesis, it can be shown that because data collection processes are largely based on aggregate indicators, there is insufficient information to undertake an adequate analysis of social exclusion. In order to establish this point, official data sets are reanalyzed to see how far they can take us in helping to understand the complex nature of social exclusion. In particular, it will be shown that the indicators related to the education status of children are insufficiently disaggregated to enable an improved understanding of the characteristics of children that continue to be excluded. From this analysis it will be argued that a broader list of indicators needs to be developed related to the dynamics at the level of the school, community and household. However, given that social exclusion may be structured differently in various contexts it

is argued that participatory research is required that facilitates the assessment and analysis of these dynamics by all the key stakeholders, including children, at the various levels. In particular, policy makers fail to involve children in the process of assessing and analyzing the reasons for exclusion, and therefore do not benefit from their perceptions and insights. Further analysis of the various dynamics which relate to exclusion provide useful insights to better understand the policy and programmatic initiatives that effectively address the social exclusion of children from primary school.



## **Introduction**

This thesis focuses on the social exclusion of children of primary school age in India and Mozambique by examining two related aspects: the policies that have been adopted in both countries to tackle social exclusion and the indicators they have used to identify it. It is argued that existing policy indicators in both countries can provide a partial answer to the question of how far they have been able to address social exclusion but that indicators and analyses need to be more fine grained both to monitor social exclusion and provide leads as to how it can be eradicated.

The social exclusion approach stands in direct opposition to the World Bank's 'one size fits all' approach to addressing poverty through education (Rose, 2006). This approach has come under sustained criticism, especially with its emphasis on parental choice and markets in developing countries. In contrast, a social exclusion approach suggests that a 'one size fits all' policy will fail because it does not address the particularities of social exclusion in different contexts. A key argument of this thesis is that there are differences as regards to social exclusion created by particular social contexts.

Based on an analysis of the extent of social exclusion from primary school in India and Mozambique and the effectiveness of current approaches to address this violation of human rights, what are the policy and programmatic lessons and related methodological issues which can be drawn from these country analyses that will further accelerate progress towards ensuring that all children realize their right to education?

This thesis reviews the extent of social exclusion from primary education in India and Mozambique and summarizes programmatic interventions, policy options and related measurement and methodological issues with the objective of accelerating progress towards universal access to quality primary education. In the context of the global commitments to ensuring that all children have access to education, under the banner of Education for All, all "duty-bearers" (a term related to the human-rights based approach which is defined below), including policy-makers, planners, education authorities,

community leaders and parents, need to have an understanding of why – and which – children are excluded from primary education.

Through the two country analyses offered in this thesis, I will show that because data collection processes including periodic surveys and also routine monitoring systems are largely based on aggregate indicators, there is insufficient information to undertake an adequate analysis at all levels, including at the school level. In order to show this official data sets are reanalyzed to see how far they can take us in helping to understand the complex nature of social exclusion. In particular, it will be shown that the indicators related to the education status of children are insufficiently disaggregated to enable an improved understanding of the characteristics of children that continue to be excluded. From this analysis it will be argued that a broader list of indicators needs to be developed related to the dynamics at the level of the school, community and household. However, given that social exclusion may be structured differently in various contexts it is argued that participatory research is required that facilitates the assessment and analysis of these dynamics by all the key stakeholders, including children, at the various levels.

The influence of caste in India, and gender and poverty in Mozambique, presented in the country analyses in this thesis, have been selected in order to illustrate the diversity in the reasons why children are excluded, including demand and supply side considerations. ‘Demand’ refers to issues such as the extent to which the care-givers prioritize sending their children to school, or also the extent to which children themselves decide to continue their education. ‘Supply’ refers to issues which relate to the level of accessibility or quality of education, including for example: the skills of teachers; availability of schools; quality of infrastructure and other characteristics of the school system. The country analyses summarized in this paper will illustrate the dynamics that exclude children and also show how these two categories are inter-related.

In addition to the diverse nature of social exclusion in the two countries, the superior capacity of the Indian state compared to the Mozambique state also provides an opportunity to analyze the role of the state in these two countries to draw insights into the

way they can address social exclusion. The role of the state as a key duty-bearer to ensuring all children realize their right to education will be central in the country analyses. The various forms of social exclusion will be analyzed based on a model of understanding the dynamics within households, schools and communities, and the interactions between these key levels, within the context of state policy.

It has been my professional experience through living and working in developing countries for over a decade, which is supported by the country analyses offered in this thesis, that development agencies and governments are overemphasizing certain supply side constraints in education such as the availability of schools and increasing the availability of teachers. This ‘one size fits all’ approach mentioned above therefore fails to address some of the key issues which result in the exclusion of disadvantaged children from primary school. A more comprehensive policy and programmatic approach is necessary in order to address the diverse range of factors that exclude children from school. As mentioned above, this however necessitates that disaggregated information is available at all levels to ensure that duty-bearers meet their obligations.

The recognition of the importance of adopting a more comprehensive approach to understanding the social reasons for why children are excluded from school presents challenging methodological issues. Based on a review of how policy objectives are defined and progress is measured, I recommend that further forms of data collection and analysis are required including participatory action research in order to provide insights into the community, household and school level dynamics which result in the exclusion of certain children from primary school. This form of research, it will be argued, can also be seen to be educational and participatory when it includes families who have been excluded. This will also enable the continuous monitoring of the effectiveness of interventions to address barriers to school. Improved monitoring systems will lead to more nuanced approaches to addressing the various barriers to education which are faced by certain children. I will conclude that in order to effectively address social exclusion of children, information must be available at the appropriate levels, including most

importantly at the community level, to enable accountability systems to be in place that ensure duty-bearers fulfill their obligations.

The thesis will not attempt to isolate specific causes of children dropping-out or never-enrolling, as it will be recognized that many overlapping determinants are at the root of children being excluded in both countries. The enquiry is intended to contribute to the programme planning and policy-related discussions by informing development practitioners and decision-makers about the usefulness of adopting a social exclusion approach.

To this end the thesis focuses on four questions:

1. To what extent have the policies of the Indian and Mozambican governments addressed the question of social exclusion?
2. Are there differences in the causes of social exclusion in education in the two countries?
3. What are the limitations of the data that both governments collect to monitor and address social exclusion?
4. What further data and of what kind (quantitative or qualitative) need to be collected in order to provide a better understanding of the nature of social exclusion from primary school?

## **Background**

The global commitment to ensuring that all children are enrolled and attend school has been repeatedly reconfirmed during the last 20 years. The Education for All goals were initially formally established with the support of the global community at Jomtien (Thailand) in 1990. The goals were reaffirmed at the 2000 World Education Forum in

Dakar (Senegal), and also were prominently included in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were also established in 2000. Through the ratification of the Millennium Development Goals, governments committed to achieving universal access to free, quality and compulsory primary education by 2015. Goal Two of the MDGs, which is Achieving Universal Primary Education, has a corresponding target (number three), which is to “ensure that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling” (United Nations 2008, p.12). The target emphasizes not only enrolment, but also completion of primary education. Social exclusion, however, is only directly addressed in the MDGs with regards to gender inequality. Goal three: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women includes target four: “Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and at all levels of education no later than 2015” (United Nations, 2008, p.16). While the emphasis on gender equality is welcomed, as will be shown in this thesis, this objective of numerical parity between boys and girls is limited and does not encompass the wider concept of social inclusion. The EFA goals, which were developed at the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000, strengthen the earlier EFA goals developed in Jomtien in 1990. One of the specific targets of the EFA ‘Dakar’ goals is “ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality” (UNESCO, 2008, p.56). The EFA goals therefore do not contradict the MDGs but considerably expand on them, including a more explicit mention of promoting an emphasis on socially excluded groups.

However, despite the global commitment and overall progress in levels of primary school enrolment in most developing countries, including in India and Mozambique, disparities continue to persist in the access to quality primary education. Most developing countries, including India and Mozambique, have successfully expanded access to primary school to the majority of their populations as seen in high enrolment rates. However, many countries are finding “that the remaining minority are a ‘hard to reach’ category, not responsive to general ‘pro-poor policies’” (Seel, 2007, p.7). I will show in this thesis that, in the case of India and Mozambique, children continue to be socially excluded based on

various characteristics including gender, age, caste, economic status, nationality, race, location of residence and other characteristics. Furthermore, while there has been a significant increase in the attention and amount of resources that have been allocated to increasing access to primary education, particularly enrolment, in almost all developing countries, there has been insufficient attention to the dynamics which persist and exclude certain children either from attending school or inhibit their learning experience while at school. In general, “energy has been focused too narrowly on enrolment, without sufficient attention to attendance, completion and attainment, or to the processes through which those outcomes can be achieved” (UNESCO 2007, p.2). I will argue that the human-rights based approach, and more specifically the discussion on social exclusion from this perspective, broadens the discourse on the effectiveness of policies and programmatic interventions in improving the access and quality of primary education. It also emphasize the need for context specific analysis, and a firm understanding of the immediate causes – and also the structural causes – of exclusion of children from school.

### **The Development of a Human Rights Based Approach**

From the Cold War period until the late 1980s, the human rights debate was framed and dominated by the East-West ideological dispute over whether civil and political rights should be take precedence and be prioritized over economic, social and cultural rights. However, after the end of the Cold War, there has been a gradual recognition of the interrelationship, rather than a dichotomy, between human rights and social development (Jonsson, 2003). This was also based on the gradual realization that this focus on economic growth was not resulting in the ‘trickling down’ of wealth or other forms of positive change in the lives of poor people (Seel, 2007). It has also been realized, as I will also argue in this thesis, that the excluded are not only those who live in poverty, but also those who experience a “wide range of disadvantages related to access to resources and services, and to associated power, status and participation” (Seel, 2007, p.4).

In 1989, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child reaffirmed the comprehensive nature of human rights and the interdependence between civil, political, social, economic

and cultural rights (United Nations Children's Fund, 2002). Article 28, Access to Education, of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states: "State parties recognize the right of the child to education and, with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity". The Social Summit in Copenhagen stated that human rights are an 'integral element of the development agenda' (United Nations, 2002). The current international framework of Human Rights, however, does not command the same level of global consensus across all rights. As Kabeer (2004, p.46) wrote, "Civil and political rights continue to command greater support than economic, social and cultural rights at the international level, particularly among the world's richer countries." However, there has been a greater recognition and appreciation of the full range of rights, and also the inter-relationship between them, amongst many governments, intergovernmental organizations and other key decision-makers related to development, as evidenced by the outcome of the above mentioned global conferences. As Rachel Hinton and Leslie Groves (2004, p.4) wrote

recent years have seen fundamental changes in dominant aid paradigms. The failure of development policy and practice to raise the standard of living of a large proportion of the world's poor has prompted a radical rethink of development policy and practice. There has been a dramatic shift from a belief in the importance of projects and service delivery to a language of rights and governance.

In the education sector, I will show later in this thesis that this has also resulted in stronger emphasis on universalizing access to primary education. "Since the mid-1990s, education efforts have shifted to a wider range of access strategies, such as reducing costs to poor parents, combined with policies to address the quality of education, often related to provision of facilities, trained teachers and basic educational resources" (Seel 2007, p.4). It will be shown that the extent of this shift has direct relevance to the policy and programmatic discussions taking place in India and Mozambique on social exclusion

The human rights-based approach to development acknowledges both the realization of a desirable outcome (such as all children attending school), and also the quality of the process that has been followed to achieve and sustain the outcome. While in the 1950s and 1960s there was a growing recognition of child rights, particularly in relation to their

basic needs, as outlined in the 1959 UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child, including access to health care, nutrition, education and also freedom from exploitation, by the 1980s, “children’s rights were being seen to include a political and moral dimension: that is, the right of the child to influence decisions that affected them” (White et al, 2003, p.384). As Jonsson (2003, p.45) wrote, “Participation, local ownership, empowerment, and sustainability are essential characteristics of a high-quality process.” The human rights approach makes an important distinction between standards and principles. Human rights standards define the benchmarks related to desirable outcomes, while human rights principles represent conditions or attributes necessary related to the process (Jonsson, 2003). The shift towards a process orientation to development, including also placing greater emphasis on participation and empowerment, can be seen in the increasingly widespread use of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) which has “revolutionized the way of thinking of many development practitioners” (Groves and Hinton 2004, p.4). At the policy and macro level, the shift towards working in partnership with the national government during the 1990s, rather than independent to them, and undertaking “participatory poverty assessments” are other indications of this shift towards a more participatory, process-oriented approach to the development process.

One of the unique features of the human rights approach as a framework, which is also relevant to the discussion on social exclusion from primary education, is the universality of rights. As Kabeer (2004, p.46) wrote,

Rights differ fundamentally from other forms of access which may prevail in a society, such as charity, status, discretion or purchasing power: they are universal in that they are enjoyed by virtue of the inherent dignity of the human being and they are mutually reciprocal in that the rights of each individual must be respected by all.

Urban Jonsson (2003, p.19) wrote that “as global requirements, human rights are formulated to promote tolerance, solidarity, peace, and human dignity. Because they may be claimed by every human being, human rights are obviously universal”. A related principle is that human rights must be enjoyed by all without discrimination based on any inherent characteristic such as gender, age or ethnic origin or caste. Human rights are



therefore inherent to every human being. This recognition therefore results in universal entitlements, such as the right of all children to education, and also obligations of the duty-bearers - who are defined as those who may influence the realization of this right. “Because law is symmetrical, the right to education entails corresponding governmental obligations” (Tomasevski 2006, p.17). Duty-bearers include parents, community members and leaders, teachers, school administrators, planners and policy-makers.

The human rights based approach has important implications for the analysis and expectations of the role of the state, which is central to the discussion on addressing social exclusion from primary education. “The government is responsible for securing the full realization of the rights of the child, including the enforcement of parental responsibilities towards their own children” (Tomasevski 2006, p.18). The law itself cannot oblige governments in resource scarce countries such as India and Mozambique, to take actions which are beyond their means – but rather can ensure that there is a progressive realization of the right to education of all children.

The insistence on the rule of law in human rights stems from the fact that governance is an exercise of power and human rights are safeguards against abuse of power. The purpose of recognizing the right to education is to act as a corrective to the free market. Governments have human rights obligations because education should not be treated merely as a commodity” (Tomasevski 2006, p.36).

Allocating sufficient public resources is one of the key elements of the role of the state in ensuring access to primary education. I will discuss this in greater detail when reviewing the situation in India and Mozambique. “The purpose of human rights law is to transform allocations for education from discretionary into obligatory. Securing a match between governmental human rights obligation in education and fiscal allocations is a key objective of human rights law” (Tomasevski 2006, p.24). The human rights framework therefore provides the basis to understand the dynamics between the rights holders and the duty-bearers, and the extent to which each duty bearer is fulfilling their respective obligations. Although a detailed analysis of the decision-making process is beyond the scope of this thesis, the discretionary nature of educational allocations in both India and Mozambique, and in most countries, and the fact that primary school children and

particularly those marginalized are not powerful political forces, often results in less funding accorded to primary education than is necessary to ensure quality education for all children.

A rights-based approach to education requires the structural causes of exclusion to be sufficiently addressed in order for all children to realize their right to education. The multifaceted causes for exclusion, which will be discussed later in this thesis, need to be addressed concurrently in order to overcome barriers to access and, thereby, realize each child's right to education.

Understanding power as complex and having a range of sources, not just the state, and recognizing that the development process must be placed in this context is also an important element of the shift towards a rights-based approach. This understanding also has a direct bearing on how one interprets the social exclusion of children from education. The various actors involved in the decision to send (or not to send) a child to school interact within a dynamic power structure. This power structure may be affected by a change process within the education system. Understanding the power dynamics which are related to the decision of whether a child attends school, and understanding how these dynamics can be influenced and by whom, is a prerequisite to applying the rights-based approach to the analysis of the situation. Robert Chambers and Jethro Pettit (2004, p.140) wrote "sharp differences in power tend to exclude people, undermining trust and accountability". Understanding the dynamics between the various duty-bearers and the extent to which they influence the realization of the right to education of all children is an important element of the human rights based approach to education.

There is a more technical, methodological element in this increased emphasis on human rights, and also a fundamental, values-based element. Regarding the former, tools and processes have been developed which are used by development partners and governments to consult with various levels of stakeholders in development related processes. However, it should be noted that in order for there to be a transformation to a more integrated, rights based approach to development, a values-based shift must also occur which

recognizes primary stakeholders as citizens as opposed to beneficiaries, and approaches the analysis and subsequent action of the duty-bearers as a means to fulfill their respective obligations rather than a process of providing charity to those who are less privileged. Shifting to a rights-based perspective is also based on the recognition that change is complex and requires an open, non-deterministic system (Groves and Hinton 2004, p.7).

As shown above, this global shift in development has important implications for addressing social exclusion in education as it emphasizes the importance of taking a broader, more holistic view of the challenge of children not realizing their right to education, and therefore not to interpret it only as a failure of the education system alone. As the human-rights based approach becomes more widely used as the underlining framework which guides policy-making and programming in the education sector, this broader approach will be adopted at the various decision-making and planning levels. As UNESCO (2007, p.2) wrote, “there has been a failure to acknowledge the complexity of the barriers impeding children’s access to school, to listen to the concerns expressed by children themselves concerning their education, to embrace a holistic approach to education, to address children’s rights in education or to embed schools as vibrant centres for community action and social development.”

From the perspective of the state, which is a key duty-bearer with obligations to the rights-holders, the human rights framework emphasizes the importance of accountability of those with the power and resources to effect change (and thereby realize the rights of the rights-holders). As UNESCO (2007, p.14) stated, “a rights-based approach implies accountability of those with duties or obligations in fulfilling, respecting and protecting the right to education.” This approach also emphasizes that sufficient mechanisms should be in place to ensure an effective level of transparency, participation and accountability at the various levels to better understand the processes related to the realization of rights and also to promote their full realization.

The concept of accountability includes identifying responsibilities and measuring whether those responsibilities are being met. From a rights perspective, accountability requires that citizens, including the most

marginalized people, engage in both defining governments' responsibilities and monitoring whether they have fulfilled their obligations (Eyben and Ferguson 2004, p.165).

The human rights-based approach also entails a certain level of responsiveness of those with obligations. Transparency is an inherent element to the rights-based approach as it emphasizes that all decision-making processes related to the stakeholders' realization of rights are open and accessible. Ensuring transparency therefore requires effective communication but also capacity strengthening of stakeholders themselves to enable effective participation (i.e., to benefit and utilize the opportunity of a transparent decision-making process). Kabeer (2004, p.36) notes that when transparency is missing, then the accountability to realize rights is diminished, "the distribution of public resources on the basis of highly personalized relationships has the effect of reproducing in the 'public sphere' the socially ascribed inequalities of kin, family and community." Ensuring transparent and inclusive processes with sufficient participation of people with the necessary support and capacity to contribute to decision-making processes that affect them is inherent to the rights-based approach.

Another important element of the rights-based approach which was introduced by the Convention on the Rights of the Child is to include the promotion of human rights through the education system. From this perspective, the overall aim of education can be defined in terms of the potential of each child and the corresponding scope of the curriculum, "clearly establishing that education should be a preparatory process for promoting and respecting human rights" (UNESCO 2007, p.8). Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the child "requires the development of education that is child centred, child friendly and empowering, and that education goes beyond formal school to embrace a broad range of life experiences through which positive development and learning occur" (UNESCO 2007, p.8).

A thorough analysis of the implications of adopting a human rights-based approach to programming is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, it will be shown in the country analyses that this approach encourages a broader perspective to understanding the causes

of social exclusion. The approach also emphasizes the importance of focusing on both achieving the desired outcome of ensuring all children realize their right to education and also following a quality process – that is, one which is inclusive and participatory. In other words, this approach emphasises that means and ends should not be divorced and that the methods used to develop inclusive education should respect the views and rights of students. Parallels can be drawn to the recognition that poverty is not merely a lack of income, but includes broader set of indicators related to various forms of deprivation. Similarly, social exclusion is not only a development issue, but is also a human rights issue and therefore requires a more comprehensive and process-oriented response.

Inherent to the rights-based approach to education, and to addressing social exclusion, is the importance of enabling participation of children, and parents, in relevant processes related to the access and quality of education. Facilitating participation is crucial both as a means – that is, to ensure that the consultative platforms are available which results in feedback and accountability of the duty-bearers to fulfill their respective obligations – but is also an important result in itself as it is a key component of providing a quality education. As Kabeer (2004, p.49) noted, community participation is “not merely a mechanism for downloading social responsibilities to the voluntary sector but also a means of securing greater transparency, responsiveness and accountability from service providers.”

Addressing the social exclusion of children from primary education and other basic services is central to realizing a range of rights. This is because there is an interrelationship between the realization of the right to education and that of other rights, with education acting as a spring-board to ensure not only the realization of other rights at the individual level, but also accelerating development of the community and country as a whole. As Katarina Tomasevski (2006, p.7), the Special Rapporteur on the right to education of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights from 1998-2004, wrote “the rationale of the right to education is that it functions as a multiplier, enhancing all rights and freedoms when it is guaranteed while jeopardizing them all when it is violated.” As will be shown in the country analyses on India and Mozambique, there is a

strong link between education and other social goods – a point made strongly by Dreze and Sen (1995). This is not to claim, however, that realizing every child's right to education will ensure other rights are fully realized. As Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery (2008) observes, attaining an education does not automatically result in securing employment or enjoying other key rights, and has, in the case study he offers on youth in a community in Northern India (which is further discussed in the chapter on India), resulted in unrealized expectations for the recently educated youth which has had other social and cultural implications.

Child development is a sequence of events for which there are very limited if any 'second opportunities'. That is, if a child suffers from a lack of support or access to a service, for example health care when it is needed, or education during their formative years, then once missed, the window of opportunity closes permanently. The 'second opportunities' which do exist, for example a rapid education programme or campaign to teach reading and writing to children who have dropped-out, are often interventions of limited scope and can be costly and have varied results. Realizing a child's right to education will therefore avoid the necessity of developing 'second opportunities' which are expensive and, in many instances, not effective.

It should also be noted that poverty and exclusion affect children the most, not only because they are a vulnerable population with unique needs, but also because it can result in life-long and irreparable damage to their minds and bodies. The implications of children living in poverty, or being excluded from a service such as primary education, are greater not only to the affected individuals but also to the development of the country more broadly, as children are not realizing their potential and therefore the country is losing an important resource as an engine of positive change.

While an economic analysis including reviewing the return on the investment in education on economic growth is beyond the scope of this thesis, it can be concluded that investing in primary education to ensure that all children have access to quality education is not only a human rights issue, but is also a necessary prerequisite for sustainable

development. Ensuring the right to education of all children has been “affirmed in numerous human rights treaties and recognized by governments as pivotal in the pursuit of development and social transformation” (UNESCO 2007, p.1).

Within this overall positive analysis of the return on investing in primary education, girls’ education in particular is a ‘best buy’, both because of its intrinsic value but also because it can be instrumental in inducing change within the household; in the broader community and within society more generally. Based on a review of the research, the key factor when analyzing the private rate of return to education is not the number of years a child has studied but rather the attainment of learning outcomes (Barr et al. 2007). The relationship between a mother’s education and the well-being of her children has been repeatedly demonstrated and will be reconfirmed once again in the examples offered in this thesis of India and Mozambique. Therefore, investing in the education of girls has positive implications which go beyond the individual who has benefited from the service.

Several analysts have written about the strong relationship between growth of a country’s economy and the extent of poverty reduction. The World Bank’s World Development Report on ‘Equity and Development’ (2006) concluded that the pursuit of equity and the pursuit of economic prosperity are complementary. UNESCO (2007, p.13) wrote that “measures to promote universal access to education and overcome discrimination against girls, children with disabilities, working children, children in rural communities, and minority and indigenous children will serve to widen the economic base of society, thus strengthening a country’s economic capability”. Conventional wisdom, however, as well as advice from certain donors including the International Financial Institutions, continues in India and Mozambique to emphasize the belief that growing disparities will be resolved with further growth and economic development. However, in both countries, an analysis of the current trends in certain key indicators related to primary education, but also related to poverty more generally, does not support this position. The data which is summarized in this thesis points to the continued need to identify policies and new delivery mechanisms that will improve the well-being of all children, including the poor, disadvantaged and socially excluded. The need to reduce disparities is one of the key

constraints to meeting the education-related targets outlined within the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) by 2015. Continued disparities and exclusion is also one of the main reasons why rapid growth or scaled-up investments will not necessarily result in the achievement of the MDG related targets by 2015 (United Nations Children's Fund, 2004).



## **Chapter 1: Literature Review and a Theoretical Framework for Social Exclusion**

In order to understand the contribution of the social exclusion approach, I will summarize the earlier approaches to development and to enhancing the education sector in particular and contrast this with the social exclusion approach. It will be shown that the earlier emphasis on enhancing the availability of schools, and more recently on improving the quality of the education provided, fails to address some of the social dynamics that are important factors to ensuring all children realize their right to education.

Regarding the process of development, the shift from an almost exclusive focus on economic development following the end of the Second World War, to the adoption of a broader human rights approach summarized above, provides a useful context to the discussion on social exclusion. In general, as mentioned above, the focus of development from the 1950s to the 1980s was on realizing positive change in the social and economic sectors and was less focused on promoting the realization of civil and political rights. As Seel (2007, p.4) summarized,

Earlier models of development often assumed that economic growth would reduce poverty. In the education sector, concern for national development and economic growth was the initial driver for the expansion of the education systems from the 1950s through to the late 1980s, with this initial drive tending to focus on physical expansion (e.g. building schools) as well as technical skills training.

During this period, the international community was less concerned with the quality of the process, but instead were focused more on the measurable outcomes that were achieved (Jonsson, 2003).

The focus of more recent studies and corresponding explanations for the persistence of poverty and under-education in developing countries have included an acknowledgement of demand-side constraints (i.e., low level of prioritization to attending school), but almost exclusively emphasized income poverty as the key factor. Understanding the disadvantaged status of households only as a lack of income results in narrowing the

analysis of demand side constraints to the point of ignoring important elements of why children are excluded from school. It should be noted, and will be further discussed, that poverty often overlaps with social exclusion, compounding the barriers to school for these excluded groups.

Furthermore, to address the supply dimensions of the problem, it has been my experience that the predominant argument within development organizations and also governments is that this can be addressed by providing more resources, and consequently, more teachers, schools and other components of the education system. As will be discussed in this thesis, the underlying causes for why disadvantaged children drop-out (or never enroll) includes limited accessibility and quality of the education service, including the location of the school in the village, which can be addressed by the above approach, but also involves other issues such as the level of inclusiveness of the classroom environment; the broader social dynamics in the community; and the link between the household, community and school. In the two country analyses offered in this thesis, India and Mozambique, the broader issues which go beyond a traditional analysis of supply side constraints remain largely unaddressed and therefore remain as important barriers to reaching the overall objective of all children completing primary school.

### **An Overview of the Theory of Social Exclusion**

Kabeer (2004, p.3) has written extensively on poverty and social exclusion and summarizes social exclusion as follows: “Social exclusion reflects the multiple and overlapping nature of the disadvantages experienced by certain groups and categories of the population, with social identity as the central axis of their exclusion.” The Department for International Development of the UK Government, in 2005 defined social exclusion as follows:

Social exclusion describes a process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status or where they live. Discrimination occurs in public institutions, such as the legal system or education and health

services, as well as social institutions like the household, and in the community (DFID 2005, p.5).

Social exclusion from education specifically can be summarized as “the denial or restriction of access to and meaningful participation in educational institutions and processes” as a result of social dynamics (Sayed and Soudien 2003, p.1). The children who are excluded are typically poor, and are disproportionately girls (Seel 2007). “Almost without exception, they are also affected by other forms of social exclusion, for example on the basis of caste, ethnicity, language, disability or citizenship status. They are the multiply-vulnerable children, perhaps living in isolated communities with language and cultures that differ from the mainstream” (Seel 2007, p.7). It will be shown that it is therefore important to understand the community level dynamics that affects the educational status of children, and the role of the state to influence practices which lead to exclusion.

The usefulness of analyzing the access and quality of education from the perspective of social exclusion rests on its emphasis on the role of relational features in deprivation (Sen, 2000). The value of the concept of social exclusion “lies in focusing our attention on two central elements of deprivation: its multidimensionality, and the processes and social relations that underlie deprivation” (de Haan, 1999, p.1). This is a key conceptual difference between poverty as a concept and exclusion – with the latter emphasising the fact that being excluded is a result of multiple dynamics that are often mutually reinforcing. Policies and programmatic interventions which aim at ensuring access to primary education of all children, including those which are traditionally socially excluded in a community, need therefore to be seen not only as a strategy to promote access of all children to school but also more fundamentally as a challenge to the prevalent basic cultural norms within a community.

Jordan argues that social exclusion can be interpreted as a result of the economics of collective action. “Put crudely, poor people are excluded because they cannot make the relevant contribution, and thus lose the benefits of membership” (Jordan, 1996, p.18). From the broader perspective of social exclusion, group interactions can be understood as

aiming at maximizing value and minimizing costs. This includes analyzing which individuals are accepted as members of the broader community and benefit from this membership and the extent to which others have increased vulnerability as a result of being excluded from community activities and resources. Generally, the consequence of being excluded from the community is often to significantly increase vulnerability of the excluded household, as they do not benefit from the social safety net which is accorded to the members of the community. “Individuals are most vulnerable when they have fewest personal capacities and material resources....but none of these threatens their survival so long as they enjoy the protections afforded by membership of an inclusive group, that co-operates productively and redistributes its product” (Jordan 1996, p.5).

Jordan (1996, p. 164) further wrote that “all interactions take place in the context of norms, practices and institutions that steer, stabilize and regulate them.” Members of a particular community regulate each other’s actions by reinforcing norms related to social obligations by offering mutual support and assistance that is often on a reciprocal basis. Analyzing the social characteristics that are required to gain social acceptance is an important element of understanding social exclusion. “All social formations have rules about rights as well as obligations, which determine when, where and how the goods for final consumption will be distributed. These rules are laid down collectively, but result in individual entitlements” (Jordan 1996, p.26). I have adopted social exclusion as a framework in order to capture these social norms, including those which relate to caste, gender, HIV/AIDS status, poverty and other characteristics, based on recognition that the characteristics, while often ignored, have an influence on the level access and quality of primary education for excluded populations.

The importance of social networks as a livelihood strategy should also be recognized, particularly in developing countries where service delivery mechanisms are weaker and formal public social safety nets limited. As Kabeer (2004, p.35) wrote,

Personalized social networks in a community and clan continue to play a key role in the livelihood strategies of both rich and poor households. Such networks, which draw their legitimacy and resilience from their ability to provide for members in times of needs and to extract the

obligations to meet such needs, constitute a key source of security in contexts where institutional alternatives are either absent or unreliable. In a resource limited environment, these relationships can reinforce a 'limited group morality' in that the loyalty of members is restricted to other members of the same networks rather than extended to all sections of society.

Those with the necessary forms of capital (social, economic, etc.) gain access to limited public resources or services, while others remain excluded as they do not have the required resources (or social characteristics) that enable access to the community resource. An important, often unexplored, dimension to this exclusion is the extent to which it is a result of individuals not having the required capital to access the service or the extent to which certain groups are purposively excluded by those in power in order to ensure that the public service remains accessible to only a subsection of the community. By excluding some from a particular service, such as a school, the 'value' of the service as an exclusionary tool is retained. It will be shown in the analysis of India that this is one interpretation of the exclusion of children of lower castes from primary school.

In addition to understanding the characteristics or 'admission fee' that is required for full membership of a community and also the corresponding benefits, the concept of social exclusion also includes understanding the dynamics in which various groups relate to each other.

An additional feature of the social exclusion approach (in contrast to defining poverty in terms of material possession, or deprivation of services, which is the predominant focus of public discourse on poverty) is the causal dynamics of exclusion, especially as they relate to intentional actions by certain groups to limit opportunities for others (Marshall and Calderon, 2006, p.2).

This usefully incorporates into the analysis of the exclusion of certain children from school, the relevant attitudinal and relational issues which are, for example, at the heart of the caste system in South Asia and also in the exclusion of certain disadvantaged children in Southern Africa. This perspective also provides further recognition of the importance that policies and corresponding interventions are developed based on an understanding of

a broader range of factors, including for example an analysis of how group dynamics will be affected at community level.

Communities generally have common resources, such as a water source, road or school. The efficient and successful management of such a resource involves the creation of a set of obligations. The basis of these obligations may result in the exclusion of certain members of the community. Recognizing that every community has a certain level of organization and identified “social norms”, as sub-groups within a community mobilize, they may challenge the established norms of the broader community and thereby change the level of access to the community resource. As Jordan (1996, p.77) wrote, “Distributional coalitions of all kinds are collusions through which organized interests seek to gain at the expense of unorganized individuals. Vulnerable people are vulnerable precisely because they are in no position to organize.” Hence, social exclusion can be seen as a result of collective action in a competitive environment and can include actions in the social, economic and political arena. In both country analyses summarized in this thesis, the patterns of exclusion, and the social norms which underpin them, are changing. For example, the increase in the enrolment of girls in schools in Mozambique to near parity at the primary level has the potential of contributing to long-term change to the traditional social practice of excluding girls. The level of awareness of gender discrimination, and also the stigma related to HIV/AIDS, is also increasing at all levels enabling ‘space’ to dialogue on the extent of social exclusion related to gender and HIV/AIDS exists and what can be done to address it. Similarly, the example from India will show that, particularly in poor states such as Uttar Pradesh, people from scheduled castes are becoming more politically active and organized, and this may result in an increase in their influence (Mehrotra, 2006a). This may also result in an enhanced capacity to challenge the social norm of excluding people from lower castes.

### **Power and Social Exclusion**

Preventing access to a community resource by one group can also be interpreted as an individual or community exercising power over another, often for the purpose of

maintaining the status quo. As mentioned above, the status quo can relate to the need to preserve an exclusionary practice related to a community-owned or managed resource. As Sayed and Soudien (2003, p.17) noted, “Social and educational exclusion are seen to occur around a complex of injustices, which can usefully be addressed through understanding the culture of power.”

Theorists have interpreted the use of power of some over others in different ways, each of which has a certain relevance to the discussion on social exclusion. Although Clegg’s (1989) account is not exhaustive, he discusses various different approaches. The first of these is a Marxist or structuralist account of power. He argues that: “For structuralist or class hegemonic theorists, political community is simply translated into ideological reproduction, class hegemony or false consciousness – a false moral order for which sovereignty resides in the ruling class, ruling structures and ruling meanings” (p.25). From this lens, the social exclusion of children from primary education can be interpreted as one class within a community exerting their power over another, less powerful class in order to maintain the status quo. This interpretation may be particularly relevant in the case of social exclusion based on caste, understood as an underclass as described in the country analysis of India. The next dimension fills out this point but emphasizes the interaction between those exerting the power and those who respond to its exercise.

However, in commenting on Neo-Marxist analyses Unterhalter et al., (2006, p.587) in a study on social relations in schools in South Africa, commented that explanations of class and race, until the late 1980s, were based largely on “ways in which these social divisions were intrinsic to relations of production and the form of the state”. That is, recognizing the context of South Africa at that time, the state was seen as perpetuating the power relations in the country, including related to class and race. This included how power was reproduced and role of the state and its institutions, which were “portrayed as ideological and repressive state apparatuses”, which “generally included schools” (Unterhalter et al. 2006, p.587). Based on the new political reality in South Africa, Unterhalter et al., (2006, p.587) pointed out that there was a move away from this “state-centered, class-focused, economic and reproductionist analyses” to an “enhanced understanding of the complex

processes by which identities are constituted (and) the capacity of subjects to occupy multiple subject positions”. The authors commented that this has “exposed the limitations of simple formulations based on causal connections between race, class, and gender inequalities” (Unterhalter et al. 2006, p.587). The social exclusion approach, as opposed to simple measurements of income poverty or supply constraints, includes an analysis of the complex social dynamics within the community, household and at the school itself which influence the chances a child will attend school. I will show in this thesis that the role of the state is important in measuring and influencing these dynamics.

Post-structuralism also highlights amongst other factors the importance of language, and in the broadest sense, recognizes that “language defines the possibilities of meaningful existence at the same time as it limits them” (Clegg, 1989, p.151). While a full analysis of the importance of language in education is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is important to note that the use of language is one important way that people can be identified, categorized or grouped. The use of language is therefore relevant in the analysis of social exclusion as it can result in excluding children without certain language capability. The use of language is also important in how it can shed light on the creation of an identity – including how a group perceives itself. For example, in India, when and how does an individual come to see themselves as “untouchable” or a “Dalit”, and in Mozambique, when and how does a girl begin to understand the barriers to accessing education because she is defined as HIV positive? How does this realization come about and to what extent does it negatively affect their identity and thereby, perpetuate the social exclusion of a particular group? How is this understanding articulated and by whom? Understanding this process will also shed light on some of the reasons for the social exclusion of children from primary school.

Through language, our sense of ourselves as distinct subjects is constituted. Subjectivity is constituted through a myriad of what post-structuralists term ‘discursive practices’. The meanings of a membership within the categories of discursive practice will be constant sites of struggle over power, as identity is posited, resisted and fought over in its attachment to the subjectivity by which individuality is constructed (Clegg, 1989, p.151).



Identities are not fixed, but rather are relational, and are defined in terms of difference which is described using specific language.

This post-structuralist perspectives could be considered consistent with pluralist perspective in which power is understood as something “which a concrete individual had to be seen to be exercising for it to exist” (Clegg, 1989, p.9). Elaborating on this perspective, Clegg (1989, p.9) wrote,

Power prevents some other equally concrete individual from doing something which he or she would prefer to have done. Power was exercised in order to have those subject to it fall in with the individual preferences of the powerful. Characteristically pluralists regarded power as most likely to be dispersed among many rather than fewer people; to be visible in instances of concrete decision-making rather than through reputation; to be competitively bargained for rather than structurally pervasive; to be best dispersed than narrowly concentrated in communities.

This perspective is relevant particularly when analyzing certain barriers to access to education, for example when teachers behave differently with children from certain backgrounds. Furthermore, it is also relevant when reviewing policy options related to decentralizing planning and management of the education system as a means to encourage participation of various stakeholders in a process of making the school system more inclusive.

The various interpretations of power highlight the fact that groups and individuals interact within a community not as equals or within a power vacuum, but rather as individuals or groups with varying degrees of resources – financial, social and other forms – and this influences the nature of these interactions and also the resulting benefits. Understanding these dynamics is the basis of understanding the root causes of the various forms of social exclusion.

The concepts of inclusion and exclusion press for much closer conscious and self-conscious consideration of identity and role: who is doing the excluding and including, who is choosing the excluding and including, how are these processes of inclusion and exclusion facilitated, and what

are the dominant views and relations of social, economic and political power? (Sayed and Soudien, 2003, p.17)

Knowledge is another element of social exclusion and power and therefore addressing social exclusion through an empowerment process of the disadvantaged will need to involve the transfer of knowledge. As Bhola (1992, p.9) wrote “the now peripheral peoples must become knowledgeable to be able to participate as citizens, to name their disadvantage, to make demands on the system, and to exercise choice.” A socially excluded group must have a minimum level of resources, which will include knowledge, in order to be able to effectively participate in a process of undermining the power relations within a community which excludes a certain group.

As shown above, there has been a growing recognition that the interaction between society and the individual is complex and multi-dimensional. The shift to a broader interpretation of power relations and the role of the state is consistent with the conceptual framework offered in this thesis. It recognizes the relevant processes and dynamics at the level of the community, school and household that takes place within various complex power relationships, and their respective influence on the extent of social exclusion of children from primary school.

### **Drawing the Threads Together**

In order to analyse social exclusion this review has identified two related elements that combine to create social exclusion. The first concerns income poverty, but it was argued that addressing the material basis of exclusion – poverty – is not sufficient; rather a second level of analysis is required and this relates to Sen’s notion of the social capability to realize the substantive freedoms to “enjoy the kind of life he or she has reason to value”(Sen, 2006, p.949). Sen, therefore, draws a distinction between income poverty and capability poverty, where the latter can be seen as relating to the ways social exclusion operate to inhibit the exercise of social capability. This then suggests that we need to examine both the material basis of exclusion in terms of poverty as well as the social

processes that exclude. These two processes can be seen to run through this thesis including informing the kind of data that is required to understand social exclusion from primary school.

## **Chapter 2: Overview of the Various Dynamics which Influence Social Exclusion in Primary School**

The barriers that some children continue to face in accessing and benefiting from primary school can be formidable. In order to analyze social exclusion of children from primary education, it is necessary to analyse a broad range of dynamics that influence the education experience of various children and ultimately, the decision to attend (or not attend) school. These dynamics can be categorized as follows: 1) characteristics and processes within the school (e.g., teaching processes, school environment, background of teachers, extent of discriminatory practices, etc.), 2) processes within the community (e.g., social dynamics and norms, extent of inclusive decision-making related to education etc.), and 3) household and individual characteristics and related processes (e.g., caste, poverty, gender, HIV/AIDS status, location of house in community, numbers of children within a household, nutrition level, educational level, occupation of parents, value placed on education etc.). The dynamics within each of these categories, and how they interact with each other, affect a child's chances of accessing and regularly attending school, and completing and ultimately achieving an acceptable level of learning. For example, certain social norms within a community, such as biases against people of a particular caste, or gender related social norms, may influence the management and teaching practices at the school that could result in the exclusion of certain children. Therefore, the relevant dynamics at the school, community and household levels are interrelated and can also be reinforcing. The World Bank (2004, p.25) noted the importance of the relationship between what they term the "provider" and the client in the realization of positive outcomes.

Clients are diverse: they differ by economic status, religion, ethnicity, gender, marital status, age, social status, caste. They may also differ in the constraints on their time, their access to information and social networks, or their civic skills and ability to act collectively. The inequalities between these groups are mirrored in the relationship between clients and providers.

At the level of the primary school and related processes, I will show in the country analyses that there are various structural characteristics of the school that affect certain

children in different ways. For example, the absence of water and sanitation facilities will be shown in the country analyses to have a greater exclusionary impact on girls than boys in primary school. The construction of separate latrines for girls in particular has had a strong positive effect on girls' enrolment in primary schools (World Bank, 2004). The location of the school within the village will also be shown to be an important factor.

An inaccessible or poor quality school will affect the education experience of all the children and not only those children who are socially excluded. Certain characteristics of a school system, however, will directly influence the level and characteristics of social exclusion, such as for example a teacher who does not treat all children equally by making some children sit at the back of the class (i.e., children from lower castes, or girls). This will have a direct bearing on the extent the discriminated children are excluded. As Kabeer (2004, p.40) noted, "Public providers have been found to often act directly as agents of social exclusion." Recognizing the importance of having qualified and motivated teachers, it is important to understand the beliefs and practices of teachers as this will have a direct influence on the extent of inclusiveness within the school. Carrim (2001) highlighted the importance of the teachers' own identities and how they influenced the environment in the school.

The type of incentives that are in place that effectively promote teachers and education managers to promote an inclusive environment is also an important determinant. As Kabeer (2004, p.43) noted,

The structure of incentives (implicit as well as explicit) embodied by the institutions of public provision thus plays an important role in explaining why they so often discriminate against those who are already marginalized. Equally, however, it should be possible to restructure public institutions to promote greater responsiveness on the part of public providers to the needs of the excluded.

A substantial amount of research has been done in South Africa on the extent to which the "education system reproduced class, race and sometimes gender hierarchies of society," with the overall assumption being that "education policies and practices

contributed to and helped sustain class, race, and gender inequalities primarily” (Unterhalter et al. 2006, p.588).

The quality of the education provided is an important factor related to the level of social exclusion – both the actual quality of the school and also the perception of the quality by the parents and student. Although outside the scope of this thesis, it is important to note that the curriculum may also influence the level of inclusiveness of a school. This could include both the form and content of material presented and taught, but also the informal, or hidden texts and practices that may also result in the exclusion of some children. Although I highlighted earlier that realizing the right to education is an empowering process with positive implications that can have positive affects on other rights, if the education system perpetuates the stigma and discrimination that is prevalent within society, it may actually contribute to reinforcing exclusionary beliefs and practices (Tomasevski 2004). That is, school education can be “implicated in the creation or perpetuation of national, religious, gendered, and class identities and beliefs” (Jeffery, Jeffery and Jeffery, 2008).

Kabeer (2004, p.48) coins the term “citizen-centred social policy”, in which “at the local level, it would imply understanding patterns of exclusion and marginalization within the prevailing institutional configurations of social provisioning and exploring ways of tackling their underlying causes.” It is noted that systems need to be in place that help to draw lessons related to the level of access of the traditionally excluded populations to education; the opportunities to express themselves and participate in decision-making processes; and the level the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms to ensure services are accessible and responsive. The school itself should not be seen in isolation from the systematic and institutional issues that influence the quality and accessibility of the education system. The level of support a school is provided, both financial and technical, and also the competence and focus of the monitoring system and corresponding level of support supervision within the education system are also important issues that will be further discussed in the India and Mozambique country analyses. The overall policy

environment, including the level of resources provided to the school system, also has a bearing on the capacity of the school system.

Generally, community involvement in the school system is seen to promote greater accountability of the school and therefore improve access and quality, and also enhance support to the school by providing additional resources (financial or other resources such as labour, technical support, locally available materials etc.). In many educational programmes, including in both India and Mozambique, promoting community involvement is a key component of the strategy to improve the national education system. However, when there are inherent cultural biases that are exclusionary within communities – such as the discrimination against Dalits in India or against HIV positive children in Mozambique – greater community involvement, if completely unregulated, may lead to greater exclusion by infusing these cultural biases into the school. “Community-level institutions, shaped by cultural norms and practices, can facilitate or hinder an environment for improving outcomes” (World Bank, 2004, p.29). The extent the community is involved in the management of the school, the level of diversity of those involved, and the extent to which the process is inclusive, are important factors that relate to the interplay between households and the school. A review of the literature relating to community management of services indicates that “participatory approaches are more successful in communities with less economic inequality or social heterogeneity” (World Bank, 2004). Similarly, the nature of the relationship between parents and teachers, and how that relationship is influenced by caste and other characteristics, is another dynamic that will be an important factor that will have an impact on a child’s educational experience. This will be further discussed in the two country analyses in this thesis.

The country analyses in this thesis will also include a discussion of how the dynamics within the household affect whether a child enrolls and attends school. As the World Bank (2004, p. 28) noted, “Investments in the human capital of children are sensitive to the allocation of power within households”. For example, households in which women have greater decision-making authority tend to invest more heavily in education of

children (World Bank, 2004). It will be shown that the value that parents place on education is one important factor in this decision. This assessment by parents is influenced by a number of different factors, including the quality of the education service; the level of education of the parents; the expectations of parents related to future occupations of their children; and other factors. The household will also be influenced by social norms within a community. That is, if the parents perceive the school as unsafe (e.g., due to gender-based violence in Mozambique, or caste-based violence in India) then these community-based practices will have a direct bearing on the decision-making process within the household regarding whether a child should attend school. Another example of the interplay between the school and the household is the assessment of the quality or perceived value of education by the parents, or the accessibility of the school, which correlates with the actual quality and accessibility of the school system but is also based on the expectations of parents not only of the school but related to the future potential occupations of their children. This is also based on the societal norm or “lens” they apply when assessing the education experience of their children. These dynamics will be further explored in the country analyses.

Jha and Jhingran (2005) make the distinction between the individual decision-making process (of children and their parents) regarding sending or attending school, and the institutional decision-making process, including the level of allocation of resources provided to the education system. To realize a policy objective of ensuring all children are in school, including those who are traditionally socially excluded, it is necessary that policies and programmes are based on a comprehensive understanding of the decision-making processes within and amongst these various components and levels. In order to effect positive change, it is necessary, based on a sound understanding, to influence these processes in a desired direction (Jha and Jhingran 2005, p.26). “The ‘responsiveness’ of public services to the needs of those who lack voice will also determine the extent to which public provision serves to counter or reinforce social inequality. Responsiveness includes the relevance of services” (Kabeer, 2004, p.41). Responsiveness also includes the appropriateness of the timing of the service – including for example the hours in which the school operates. Jha and Jhingran (2005, p.66) wrote that “it was clear that the



voicelessness and powerlessness of poor people also affects the relationship between poor parents and schools”.

Further to the earlier discussion regarding the role of the state, in addition to the critical role of providing sufficient level of public resources, and also establishing a policy framework with appropriate targets and corresponding system of monitoring, there is also the role in most cases of actually managing the provision of the service. While the public sector remains the predominant provider of primary education in both India and Mozambique, and in the developing world in general, the private sector is playing an increasing role, particularly in India. A comprehensive review of evidence related to the privatization of services is beyond the scope of this thesis, but it should be noted that this is an important part of the dynamics between the school, the community and household. While there may be an element of increased participation or bottom-up accountability with privately provided services, as a result of a more direct relationship between the provider and the client, private provision often entails some form of payment, and therefore can be another barrier to access for the poor. As Kabeer (2004, p.45) noted, that “while private provision has proved more efficient and financially sustainable in some contexts, and more accountable to its users in others, markets have proved even less effective than the state in reaching the poor in most contexts.” The challenge of addressing social exclusion however is more fundamental than the debate of public or private provision, although this may be one possible element of the solution.

“Where inequalities are deeply entrenched in the social structure, both state-centred and market-centred approaches have had the effect of reinforcing, rather than dissolving, pre-existing inequalities; the state because it responded primarily to those with political clout and the market because it serves only those with purchasing power” (Kabeer, 2004, p.45).

From the perspective of social exclusion, rather than a dichotomized approach to public and private provision, it will be argued that it is important to look at the various roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder in the provision of the education service, and analyze the potential influence of public or private provision to enhancing the accountability of the duty-bearers to realize their obligations to provide an inclusive education. This is an area for further research.

The role of the state in the management and provision of an inclusive education system will be discussed in both country analyses. Kabeer (2004, p.48) noted that if used properly and effectively, the role of the state has the capacity to overcome the “disempowering relations of market and custom”. She also noted that “such analysis has suggested that state involvement in the provision of basic social services may be the best way to tackle persisting forms of social exclusion” (Kabeer, 2004, p.48). Related to the role of the state is the discussion on the level of decentralization of the government. The devolution of power and decision-making is often heralded as an effective strategy to improving services, however if there is an absence of bottom-up accountability processes and/or other forms of accountability structure to ensure inclusiveness, the biases which exist within a society may be translated at local level as well. “The hierarchical and exclusionary tendencies of community-based networks would have to be actively struggled against through purposive efforts to build collective capabilities of excluded groups to exercise “voice” on their own behalf” (Kabeer, 2004, p.49). In order to be effective, policies and programmes must leverage the potential positive influences that can promote inclusion, and control for the potential exclusionary influences and practices within the school, community and also within the household. The role of the state in ensuring the availability of education for all children is critical and will be reviewed in the country analyses.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

I offer a two country comparative analysis of India and Mozambique, in order to illustrate the diversity in the dynamics related to social exclusion from primary education. Although the data are limited, through this analysis it is evident that important insights can be drawn from further analysis of the trends in primary education at national and subnational level in order to determine the extent of social exclusion and also the underlying causes. This analysis will also form the basis for recommendations in order to gain more intimate insights into the local level dynamics of social exclusion. Country analyses have been adopted to “provide a basis for drawing conclusions about a general type of phenomenon” and to “identify causal processes” (Gomm et al, 2000, p.5). Recognizing that one of the tenets of this thesis is that social exclusion is a framework or lens that will help to better understand processes that exclude children from school in diverse contexts, the countries have also been selected because the underlying causes of exclusion are very different and therefore provide a useful reference on the extent to which social exclusion provides a useful framework of analysis in different contexts in the developing world. Countries have been chosen as the unit of analyses as there are national characteristics that relate to social exclusion, and also the important role of the state in addressing social exclusion necessitates a country level analysis. Green (2003, p. 92) wrote that the main criteria for choosing the unit of comparison should be that it is “1) appropriate to the theoretical problem; 2) causally related to the phenomenon being studied; 3) that there are data available at this level.” It can be argued that the two country analyses fulfills the first two criteria because studying two countries will illuminate the differences in social exclusion operating in both, while the concept of social exclusion provides a theoretical basis for determining the kinds of data that are necessary to fulfill the human rights requirement that all children should have access to good quality education. The point about criteria 3 in this context is to assess whether such data are sufficiently available rather than assuming that they are.

Becker and Bryman (2004, p.25) describe comparative social research as a “comparison between socio-economic and political phenomena in two or more countries”. They note

that one of the challenges in adopting this methodology is “to ensure comparability, or whether the research compares ‘like with like’” (Becker and Bryman, 2004, p.126). The conceptual framework offered in this thesis highlights differences rather than similarities between countries and within them: the role of the state in addressing the social exclusion of children from primary education; the potential of further analyzing national and subnational level quantitative data from surveys and routine monitoring systems in order to better understand the dynamics related to social exclusion; and the importance of local level and context specific analysis of social exclusion from primary education. The purpose is not to compare the two country analyses in order to evaluate how they differ in terms of magnitude or severity in the form of the exclusion, but rather to understand the diversity of exclusion, and the role of the state with different capacities to address exclusion of children from school. The methodological challenges of measuring social exclusion will be summarized and it will be recommended that more work be done in this area in order to develop policy and programmatic interventions to address social exclusion from school.

The social, economic and political contexts in India and Mozambique are significantly different, as are the specific challenges related to social exclusion in primary school. They have been selected in order to benefit from this diversity when analyzing the appropriateness and effectiveness of using social exclusion as an approach to understanding the reasons why children are not attending school. The different forms of exclusion, and also the different level of capacity of government, provide a useful contrast on the role of the state in ensuring all children realize their right to school. Whether in India – with the predominant influence of caste, or in Mozambique – with unparalleled income poverty, this framework can be the basis for developing policy recommendations and programmatic interventions that would promote access to education for these excluded children. At the policy level, it will be shown that India has adopted proactive initiatives to address social exclusion in primary school, particularly the exclusion of children from lower caste or tribal groups, whereas Mozambique has to date continued to focus on ensuring access of all children by enhancing the general availability and quality of schools.

Secondary analysis using both quantitative and qualitative data will be undertaken by me to compare and assess the presentation of official statistics with further analysis which may provide insights into the processes related to social exclusion from primary education

The quantitative data presented is mainly derived from large household surveys, with cross-tabulations and regressions undertaken to analyse the relationship between children with various characteristics and the extent of exclusion from primary school. Data from routine monitoring systems collected within the school system are also cited, but the limited capacity of the education system to collect and analyze the data, and also the lack of incentives to provide accurate information, is a constraint to the quality of the data in both countries. Both countries have had large-scale surveys that include information on enrolment and attendance (Arnaldo, 2007). The households surveys summarized in the two country analyses of this thesis (Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD)), Government of India and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) 2001, IIPS (International Institute for Population Sciences), 1993 and 1999) while providing a macro picture of the situation, are limited in the level of geographic disaggregation that is possible due to the sample size. In both countries, the national surveys can only be disaggregated to the first subnational level (i.e., states in India and provinces in Mozambique), and therefore it is not possible to analyse the differences between districts – which in both countries are significant. In both countries, the most widely acknowledged source of information are the national surveys based on the Demographic and Health Survey, which is a survey undertaken in many developing countries with the support of USAID and other donors. While this survey includes important indicators related to the status of education, it will also be shown that the information collected is relatively limited vis-à-vis the potential dynamics related to social exclusion.

The source of the qualitative information on social exclusion has largely been derived from programmatic evaluations or related studies implemented with the support of the organization or donor that supports the programme intervention. One of the limitations

mentioned in this research is the relatively limited focus of many of these studies. As mentioned above, in order to adequately understand the dynamics related to social exclusion, data need to be disaggregated by various social characteristics of households, children, communities and also by geographic units. It will be shown that the national level surveys (IIPS 1999, Department of Women and Child Development, Government of India 2001, Pratham Trust 2006, Ministry of Education and Culture of Mozambique 2007) enable an analysis of the magnitude of the exclusion of children at the macro level, but due to the limitations in the survey, are not able to correlate this data with many characteristics of the household or community. It will be shown that the qualitative studies, however, cited in the country analyses of India and Mozambique, provide additional, very useful insights into some of the specific dynamics that lead to exclusion. However, the limitations of these various data sources will also be reviewed. The qualitative studies completed in both countries are limited in the scope of information and do not necessarily collect data on the various diverse dynamics that may contribute to the exclusion of children from primary school. Both the quantitative surveys and qualitative studies are also limited in terms of the sample size. For the quantitative surveys, this limits the extent of disaggregation and regarding the qualitative studies, the limited sample size constrains the extent to which the studies can be generalized. As mentioned, the qualitative studies tend to be related to the implementation of a specific education programme (Justiniano et al, 2005, Ajwad, 2006, Arnaldo, 2007, Department of Education, Government of India, 2006, UNICEF, 2008), or are in-depth studies related to a specific theme (Justiniano et al. 2005, Case and Adrington 2005, Barr 2006, Matavele 2006, Thorat 2006), and therefore are also limited in the scope of the issues that are reviewed that may have a bearing on the extent of social exclusion.

There are other key constraints relating to the extent to which the quantitative surveys that have been implemented in India and Mozambique can inform the analysis of social exclusion. While it will be shown that with additional analysis, including regressions, it is possible to gain useful insights into the characteristics of children that are not attending school, the amount of information collected regarding household characteristics is very limited in both countries and therefore there are key characteristics of the household that

are not measured but, by certain indications, are likely to be important determinants (or at least highly correlated) to the education status of the children. It will also be shown that there may also be differences between the various regions in each country due to different cultural or other factors, which are not adequately collected as part of these national surveys. While a limited amount of information is collected relating to the characteristics of households, the perceptions of the care-givers of the importance of education, or their perception of the quality of the education is not included in the large-scale surveys in both countries – although as will be shown, this is a key determinant of whether children will attend school. Other data collection exercises (Probe Team 1999) indicate that this is a key determinant of the education status. Another key constraint related to the quantitative surveys is the predominantly extractive process of collection of the information, with very little attention to feeding back the results and initiating a process of analysis and planning at local level as a result of the survey in both countries (Chambers, 1994, Becker et al. 2004). As discussed above, the process of assessing, analyzing and planning actions as a community will contribute to positive change – but this is not often included in large scale-quantitative surveys.

In addition to nation-wide, periodic surveys, another important source of information in both countries is the data available from education management information systems (Government of India, 1997 and 2002, Ministry of Education and Culture, Government of Mozambique 2005, 2006 and 2007), which are collected routinely in both countries. Although an important source of information for the stakeholders of the education system at the local level (i.e., care-givers, teachers, directors, school management committees and others), when the information is compiled at subnational and ultimately at national level, significant differences between the results from the information systems and the data from household surveys has raised concerns about the quality of the information from the routine information systems in both countries. Recognizing that the data collectors (i.e., teachers and school directors) are also held accountable for the status of many of the indicators, there can be an inherent disincentive to report accurately on some indicators (such as the attendance rate) if that reflects poorly on performance of the

school and also, as will be shown in India, may have financial implications (as the funding allocation to the school is based on the numbers of children attending).

As explained above, the interplay between the school and the household is a key element of the extent of social exclusion. Because the large-scale surveys undertaken in both countries collect very little information about the characteristics of the school, the level of the analysis that is possible regarding the inter-relationship between the school and the household is correspondingly very limited. This is a key constraint to the extent to which these surveys can then inform the policy-making and planning process to realize the objective of “education for all”. It will be shown in the country analyses that there have been notable exceptions in both countries (Probe Team, 1999, Arnaldo, 2007) – with studies that have included more in-depth analysis of school characteristics and their relationship with households providing important insights. However, these are limited in the extent of their respective geographic coverage, and therefore, it is not possible to generalize the results to the national level. Combining both quantitative and qualitative information that includes a wide range of characteristics of the household and school has, however, proven to be a very useful source of information in both countries (Probe Team, 1999, Arnaldo, 2007). The importance of undertaking a participatory approach to collecting and analyzing the data (Chambers, 1994) will also be noted as the information related to social exclusion is based on local dynamics that must be interpreted through those familiar with – and living in – a particular social context.

### **Measuring poverty and social exclusion**

There is a significant literature on the definition of poverty and resulting implications for policies aimed at reducing poverty which also sheds light on the issue of social exclusion. Jordan argues that the liberal tradition interpreted poverty by focusing on poverty lines and relative deprivation rather than on social interaction. “The literature of the liberal tradition was mainly concerned with the definition and measurement of poverty, and explaining its persistence in welfare states as a failure of social security systems” (Jordan, 1996, p.93). Peter Townsend (2000) wrote that a relative approach to poverty should be



adopted in which people needed a certain level of income in order to fully participate in the societal processes and relationships, including following the customs that are expected in order to be considered members of the community. He argued that below this level of income, exclusion from active membership of society becomes “disproportionately accentuated” (Townsend, 2000). Amartya Sen, however, interpreted Townsend’s argument as having confused the lack of certain commodities in households with their capacity to participate in social activities (which were requirements for full membership of a society), and also retain self respect (Sen, 2000). Sen’s entitlement approach analyses the capacities of individuals and households from a broader perspective. Both Townsend’s relative approach to poverty and Sen’s entitlement approach are relevant in the discussion on social exclusion because both have adopted broader perspectives in their interpretations of why some are excluded from participating in certain aspects of social and community life, including for example a child attending school. Broadening the analysis beyond only a narrower understanding of material basis for poverty, Townsend’s recognition of relative poverty takes us further in the direction of Sen’s account – which clearly raises questions about the mechanisms of social exclusion and its multidimensional characteristics.

Understanding and measuring the social dimension of inequality and related dynamics provides a lens through which to view the issue of chronic disadvantage (Kabeer, 2004). Criticisms of this approach to defining and measuring poverty have drawn attention to the apparent contradiction between the “definition in terms of social activities and relationships, and a method of measurement in terms of material resources” (Jordan, 1996, p.94). By defining poverty in terms of material possession, or deprivation of services, rather than in terms of social relationships (and the resulting exclusion), there is a risk of focusing social policy on providing universal benefits or “reaching the poor” rather than addressing the more fundamental issues related to the social exclusion of the poor. As White et al. (2003, p. 391) wrote, “conventional poverty measures, both economic and non-economic measures, fail to adequately captures issues of concern to children”.

As mentioned above, the broader analysis of social exclusion encourages that all relevant dynamics are captured in monitoring systems rather than a more narrow approach such as focusing on a lack of income alone. This would include indicators such as the perception of the quality of the education; the ethnic background and gender of the child; the extent of other potential social stigmas such as HIV/AIDS status; and other locally relevant dynamics that influence the chances a child will attend school. While this will be elaborated on later in this thesis, an example of an approach that encompasses the broader issues of social exclusion are the specific programmes in India that provide tailored education services for children who are socially excluded. The social capital which is awarded when one graduates from a recognized school is an important asset which can undermine the social exclusion of future generations of children from this excluded group. For example, it is reasonable to expect that a child from a lower caste who is able to graduate from a community school along with children from other castes would be more likely to send their own children to school as they have successfully overcome the caste barrier to access and therefore have the social capital to now send their own children to school. The related data which shows a correlation between parents' education status and the education status of children is discussed later in this thesis and further illustrates this point. Ignoring the social recognition and value of graduating from a school with a diverse community and the resulting dynamics on inter-group behavior may result in a policy such as developing specific schools for certain excluded groups which not only forgoes the above mentioned social benefit but also may further cement the exclusionary social norms by formally confirming this exclusionary practice. It will be shown in the country analysis of India that there are currently schools that are almost exclusively attended by children of lower caste. The social capital gained from graduating from such as school is obviously very limited, and, as mentioned, may even be reinforcing social norms and practices that exclude children of lower castes from "main stream" education. This is in direct contrast with schools representing a diverse communities, which contributes to the breaking-down of long-established exclusionary social norms by recognizing that all children have an equal right to education.

## **Chapter 4: Social Exclusion from Primary Education in India**

India has seen continued impressive economic growth in the recent past, gaining in international recognition for this achievement and also increased awareness of its growing influence. The rate of growth in the 2006-2007 financial year was an impressive 9.4 per cent. However, progress relating to many of the indicators related to human development has not seen the same rapid positive trend. In its approach paper for the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, the Government of India recognises that even these remarkable growth rates are not fast enough to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) or equitable enough to reach disadvantaged populations (Government of India, 2006). However, the government's repeated commitment to promoting "inclusive growth" presents a unique opportunity to address the social exclusion of children from basic services, including primary education.

There has been a significant increase in overall literacy rates and school enrolment rates across India since the early 1990s. Gender and social disparities have also generally declined with this overall increase in school attendance. This positive trend has been confirmed by various sources including both the routine education monitoring system of the Ministry of Education and also various surveys, including the National Family Health Survey-II (1998/99), Reproductive and Child Health Survey 2002-2004, and the 2001 Census. The country is approaching near universalisation of enrolment in primary school. The Gross Enrolment Rate has increased from 90% in 2003-2004 to 98% in 2004-2005. Similarly, the net enrolment rate has risen from 72% to 82% during the same period (Department of Education, 2006). A number of factors and successful initiatives of Government have contributed to this rise in the enrolment rate including the introduction of mid-day meals, opening of alternate schools, promotion of the participation and involvement of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and ambitious and widespread enrolment drives. The enrolment drives have included an intensive mobilization of all levels of government to promote the enrolment of children during the first week of school. This has been complimented by a mass media campaign to increase the awareness of the enrolment week, and to sensitize care-givers on the importance of enrolling their

children. The other key ingredient has been encouraging teachers and school management committees at local level to mobilize communities and households within the school catchment area to enroll all children. The success of this initiative is an excellent example of the potential of coordinated action at all levels, from the national level to community level, based on a specific policy objective (e.g., increasing the enrolment rates).

In terms of the key developments in the policy environment and programmatic interventions in India, a constitutional amendment was passed in 2002 making free and compulsory education a fundamental right for children aged 6-14 years. The national and state governments continue to deliver the programme *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA), which aims to achieve universal elementary education by 2010 (Jenkins, 2005).

While enrolment and attendance in primary school has increased, the quality of education remains a major concern. As I wrote previously (Jenkins, 2005, p.267),

Little emphasis has been placed on making education more relevant or in encouraging learning by doing and learning by observation. Activity-based and child-centered learning arrangements are still very weak. There are many situations where children mechanically go through five years of primary education and emerge barely literate, leading to community apathy towards schooling.

The poor quality of education is reflected in the continuing low level of completion rates of primary school. Various surveys in the recent past in India have provided data on key indicators related to the access and quality of education in the country. Both the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) and also the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) have collected data on the level of education completed. The Reproductive and Child Health Survey (RCHS) has also provided data on the years of education completed.

Recognizing the scale and diversity of India, it is difficult to summarize the overall trends in the country without over-simplifying the situation. Furthermore, there are some instances where key indicators have been defined differently in the different states. For example, the length of primary education is defined differently in the various states of India with some states having 5 years of primary education and others having only 4

years. This has an impact on the definition of completion rates, as for some states the completion rate is calculated for the 9-11 years age group while in others it is based on children 10-12 years of age. Table 1 outlines the percentage of children that have completed primary school (based on the various states definitions), and shows that based on the most recent source of data for the country as a whole, the RCHS-II (2002-2004), only 37.8% of children in 10-12 years age group have completed at least 5 years of schooling. This is a stark indication of the challenges related to the access, but also the quality, of primary education in this country. As will be shown in this analysis, other important ‘demand’ factors also result in children dropping out of school, including for example child labour or other responsibilities of children that prevent them from regularly attending.

**Table 1: Percentage of children completing primary school (various sources)**

Survey	% Completed
NSS 52 (1995-96)	32.8
NSS 55 (1999-00)	36.8
NFHS-II (1998-99)	37.7
RCHS-II (2002-04)	37.8

Disparities in primary education in India can be seen between children from different castes, various economic groups, between boys and girls, rural and urban areas, and other characteristics of households including between the different geographic locations and regions in India. The different forms of deprivation do not work in isolation. The most disadvantaged children often suffer from multiple forms of exclusion and vulnerabilities, including for example being a female child from a Scheduled Caste who is raised by a female headed household in a remote, disadvantaged area in a poor state. Separating out the specific causes of exclusion due to any one of these characteristics and attempting to address them separately would ignore the reality of the interrelationship of multiple vulnerabilities.

## **Overview of Schedule Caste in India**

It is important to understand some background associated with caste in India. As with almost all social issues in India, it is not possible to generalize this phenomenon. The specific structure and related hierarchies of castes is specific to states and regions in India, with only the highest caste, the Brahmins, consistently faring better throughout the country. It should be noted that in addition to using different terminology when referring to the various castes, the hierarchy between them may also be different between the various regions within the country.

As per the Census 2001, the total population of the Scheduled Castes (SC) in India is 166,635,700, which is 16.3 per cent of the total population (Registrar General, 2005). The population of SCs is not distributed evenly among the states in India. For example, nearly 60 per cent of all SC children of primary school-going age (6-10 years) reside in the following six states: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh (Registrar General, 2005). With the exception of Andhra Pradesh, these states are consistently among the most disadvantaged states in India across most social indicators.

While a comprehensive review of the caste system is beyond the scope of the thesis, it is important to note that historically, the caste system classified people by their occupation and status. "Each caste had a specific place in the hierarchy of social status" (Shah, 2006, p.19). Although in "scriptural terms" social and economic status was supposed to be separated, the economic and social status of the various castes have tended to coincide (Shah, 2006). As Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery (2008, p.25) wrote that in India, "both caste and religion have been important historically in governing a person's access to power, such that different caste/community groups have often followed divergent trajectories." However, since the 19th century, the link between caste and occupation has been diluted as it became easier for people to change occupations regardless of their caste. This change has accelerated with the economic boom which has taken place in India since the early 1990s as people are less constrained in how they participate in the economy – and therefore are more likely going to contribute based on their potential rather than a societal

norm. In general, however, privileged sections of society continue to be from “upper castes” while the disadvantaged sections by the so called “lower castes”. Furthermore, there has not been a corresponding fluidity in the caste structure and identity itself, as intermarriage remains very rare. Caste “can be seen as the institution that has been structuring and maintaining for centuries relations of power among different communities, and seeks to legitimize these power relations through systematically dispensing mixes of economic and cultural assets/opportunities and deprivations to different communities” (Sheth 2004, p.3). As summarized in the introduction of this thesis, social exclusion can be interpreted as one group exercising their power over another. Sheth interprets the continuing caste system as an example of the power dynamics within a society, in which those in power work to ensure the power which comes with the social capital associated with a higher caste is maintained. That is, by ensuring there is not a dilution in the boundaries between castes, the social capital which those from the higher caste gain is protected. Many have commented on the robustness of the caste system,

which has survived in the South Asian societies in one form or the other, despite the fundamental ideological and structural changes that have occurred through the spread of religious like Islam and Christianity as well as of model secular and egalitarian ideologies, all opposed to the very idea of hierarchy based on inherited statuses (Sheth 2004, p.5).

However, as mentioned in the introduction, addressing social exclusion of children from primary education can be one effective strategy to addressing this broader power dynamic between the castes.

The most extreme form of exclusion based on caste is the notion of untouchability.

For Dalits (the term meaning down-trodden or oppressed), who are at the bottom of this hierarchical system, it is their status as ‘untouchables’ which puts them at the heart of an insidious form of discrimination. This particular phenomenon results in the social unacceptability amongst people of other castes to touch the same food and utensils, draw water from the same source, or enter the same temples (Barr et al. 2007, p.2).

The castes that have traditionally suffered discrimination based on untouchability, which is an element of the caste system throughout India, have been identified, enumerated and

incorporated in the “schedule” of the Constitution. “The implicit criterion for inclusion in the SC list is the social and religious disability suffered by a caste on account of untouchability i.e. being at the pollution end of the social hierarchy” (Sheth, 2004, p.40). In defining who would be included in the Schedules, the government originally used the 1931 census report (de Haan, 2005). Currently, the National Commissions for Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) are mandated with the responsibility of considering castes for inclusion or exclusion from the Schedule, which then needs to be ratified in Parliament. The communities which are recognized as being discriminated against are then officially designated as Scheduled Castes (SCs). This designation is not confined to one religion, as included in the SC category are communities from three different religions, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism, all having within them communities traditionally suffering from “untouchability”.

The Government of India’s approach to marginalized groups is based on provisions in the Indian Constitution, which outlines explicit state obligation to protect and promote social, economic, political and cultural rights. “The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation” (Directive Principle of State Policy, Article 46). Some of the constitutional provisions which aimed at positive discrimination are:

Article 17: Abolition of “untouchability” and making its practice in any form a punishable offence

Article 46: Promotion of educational and economic interests

Article 16 and 335: Preferential treatment in matters of employment in public services

Article 330 and 332: Reservation of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies

The government has adopted positive discrimination or affirmative action as an attempt at addressing the disadvantaged status of people from lower caste.

“There is a 15% reservation of seats for SCs and 7.5% for STs in central government, and in technical educational institutions. The higher educational institutions administered by the central government reserve 15% seats for Scheduled Castes and 7.5% for Scheduled Tribes in the case



of admissions as well as in appointments (teaching and non-teaching posts)” (Barr et al. 2007, p.24).

Seats are also reserved in hostels attached to the central universities/colleges. For example, the University Grants Commission (UGC) provides relaxation of 5% from 55% to 50% at the Master’s level for appointment as Lecturer for applicants from SC/ST (Barr et al., 2007).

Scheduled caste (SC) children, however, remain disadvantaged across many social indicators. “This group is not only disadvantaged by poverty, but also by social exclusion from civil and political processes, and other forms of social interaction” (Barr et al. 2007, p.iv). Estimates from the 2000 National Sample Survey suggest that SC “constituted 20 per cent of the rural population, but 38 per cent of the poor” (Kabeer, 2004, p.3). Table 2 shows that as an average for India, 27.09% of the population live below the poverty line in rural areas, compared to 36.25% of the SC population and 45.86% in urban areas compared to 38.47% of the SC population.

**Table 2: Population below poverty line in India, SC and ST (1999/00) (NSSO, 2000)**

Population below poverty line (%)	India	SCs	STs
Rural Areas	27.09	36.25	45.86
Urban areas	23.62	38.47	34.75

Mehrotra (2006a) recognized the political and social mobilization of SCs in India, particularly in certain poor states such as Uttar Pradesh, which is one of the poorest states in India. However, as can be seen from the data, this has failed to translate into positive change in the social sector for this excluded population. As Mehrotra (2006a, p.1) wrote, “while UP’s mobilizers of the dalits (SCs) have focused exclusively on capturing power, the gains to the lowest castes have been entirely of a symbolic nature.”

There are multiple dimensions to social exclusion in India including being culturally assigned to the worst paid and most culturally demeaning jobs in the occupational

hierarchy (e.g., garbage collection or cleaning public washrooms), which contribute to a highly segmented labour market (Kabeer, 2004, p.9). 64 per cent of the SC labour in rural India work in agricultural wage labour – one of the poorest paid occupations in the economy, compared with just 30 per cent of ‘other’ groups (Kabeer, 2004, p.9). The hereditary association between socially excluded status and corresponding occupations is one obvious way in which households are caught in a ‘cycle of poverty’ which is transmitted across generations. “Consequently, children from marginalized groups tend to reproduce parental patterns of illiteracy and early entry into work” (Kabeer, 2004, p.10).

In India, the literacy rates of women, SC and ST continue to be below average. Table 3 shows the percentage of the ever-married women by caste who are illiterate in India, and in two selected states: Uttar Pradesh, which is one of the most disadvantaged; and Tamil Nadu, which is among the most advantaged states in India. There is a significant difference in the level of illiteracy in the two states therefore confirming the significant disparities between regions in India. The SC ever-married women were particularly disadvantaged in both states, with 85% of SC women illiterate compared with 57.2% of other higher castes in Uttar Pradesh, and 64.1% of SC women in Tamil Nadu compared with 5.0% of higher castes. As mentioned above, various characteristics that lead to discrimination can overlap, making it difficult to isolate the specific influence of a single characteristic, but also compounding the challenges and barriers that some individuals may face. For example, Scheduled Caste women face three forms of discrimination: they are women, they are Dalits and then they are Dalit women, all of which are related to exclusionary practices. Although a comprehensive discussion of the disadvantaged status of Dalit women is outside the scope of this thesis, it is important to note that Dalit women are disadvantaged in the level of access to basic services related to women, including for example being disadvantaged in level of access to maternal health services. There are

**Table 3 Distribution of ever-married women aged 15–49 who are illiterate: UP, Tamil Nadu and India (NFHS, 1998/99)**

	Tamil Nadu	Uttar Pradesh	India
Schedule Castes	64.1	85.0	73.0
Others	5.0	57.2	43.8

also examples of the level of exclusion at the community level, including for example in being excluded from using a common water point within a village (Ramachandran, 2004).

### **Caste-based Social Exclusion of Children from Primary School in India**

Social exclusion from schools in India was used traditionally by higher castes to maintain the status quo. As Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery (2008, p.39) wrote, “pre-colonial educational systems in UP characteristically augmented the powerful position of higher caste Hindus by systematically excluding large sections of the population from prestigious credentials.” They continued “the reproduction of social inequality through education has continued in the post-colonial period, as evident in studies of rural schooling.” Using completion rates of five years of schooling as an indicator of both accessibility and quality of the education system, Table 4 shows that SC population are disadvantaged when compared to Other Backward Castes (OBCs). ST children are also a disadvantaged population, with additional issues such as language and remoteness further constraining their accessibility to the education system. This thesis will however focus on the social exclusion of primary education of SC children, but will continue to show ST children in the tables as a reference.

**Table 4: Completion Rate of 10-12 years by caste (RCH 2002-2004)**

<b>Social Group</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>ST</b>	<b>OBC</b>
Male	36.3	32.6	44.8
Female	32.3	26.6	44.1

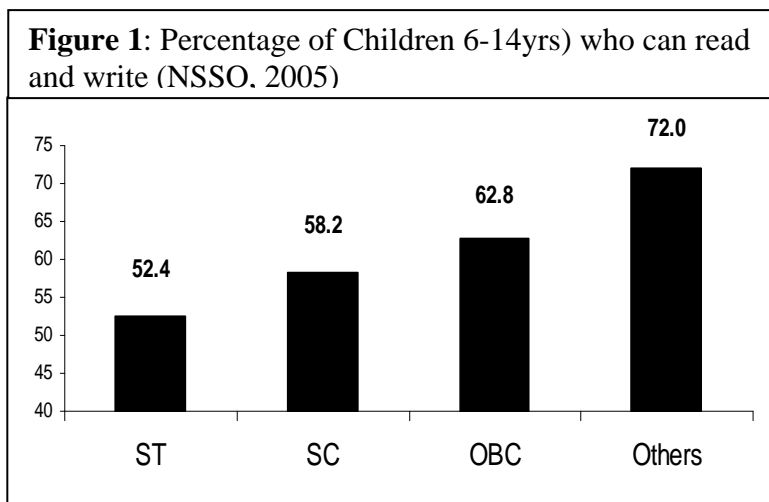
Table 5 indicates the disparities in rural areas between children from SC castes and also between the poorest 20% compared to the richest 20% of households using data from RCHS-II for boys and girls, in order to better understand the changes in social exclusion related to caste in the different economic groups. This survey defined economic status based on household’s ownership of assets such as electric fan, radio/transistor, pressure

cooker, telephone, bicycle, car, tractor and water pump among others, which as summarized in the beginning of this thesis, is a limited way of interpreting poverty but is still useful in this case to assess correlations. Table 5 indicates that SC children are disadvantaged compared to children from other castes in each of the economic groups. However, it should also be noted – consistent with a more conventional analysis of the disadvantaged status of children – that the economic status of the household is also an important discriminating factor in the level of access to education. The table also indicates that girls are disadvantaged compared to boys, particularly in the lower economic group. The table also indicates that at lower economic groups, the impact of caste is less, although with the completion rate so low (22.5% for boys and 16.5% for girls), it is not possible to draw a firm conclusion on this issue.

**Table 5: % children in 10-12 years age group who have completed at least 5 years of schooling across economic groups and gender in rural areas (RCHS, 2002-2004)**

Rural	Male			
	SC	ST	Other	Total
Poorest 20%	23.5	22.9	22.2	22.5
Richest 20%	50.0	56.9	54.2	52.9
	Female			
	SC	ST	Other	Total
Poorest 20%	17.4	15.5	18.5	16.5
Richest 20%	52.5	45.4	55.1	53.0

Figure 1 indicates the percentage of children who can read and write, disaggregated by caste, with status of tribal children included as reference. There is a significant difference between SC children and children from other castes in the percentage who can read and write, which is 58.2% compared to 72.0%



respectively.

In order to try and discern the extent to which caste is a barrier to education, multilevel regression analysis was undertaken using data from the National Family Health Survey 2 (1998/99). Based on this regression analysis, Table 6 shows that for children aged 7-17 years of age, the children from other castes are 1.35 times more likely to have 'ever been to school' than SC children after controlling for the following characteristics: working status, number of children in the family, adult female and male education levels, urban/rural and also the standard of living index. Similarly, children 11-17 years old from higher castes are 1.33 times more likely to complete grade 5 than SC children after controlling for these characteristics. The following table clearly indicates that caste of children has a significant influence on their education status.

**Table 6: Multilevel model regression for 1) ever been to school 7-17 years of age and 2) completing grade 5 among children age 11-17 years in India (calculations based on NFHS 2, 1998/99)**

	<b>Odds Ratio between castes</b>	
<b>Caste</b>	<b>Ever been to school 7-17 years of age</b>	<b>Completing Grade 5 among children age 11-17 years of age</b>
Scheduled caste	1.0	1.0
Other backward classes	1.07	1.1
Other Hindu castes	1.35	1.33

### **Reasons for the Disadvantaged Status of Scheduled Caste Children in Primary Education**

Regarding the characteristics of schools, the physical distance some children need to walk to get to school in India is often cited as a barrier for children, particularly for middle and secondary school which are not as widely available as primary school. Access

to schools in general continues to be a challenge in India. Only half of all hamlets, which is the sub-unit of a village, in rural India have a primary school, and in states like Uttar Pradesh, the proportion of such hamlets with schools is as low as 30 percent (Probe Team, 1999, p.17). The distance to school is often much greater for SC children as they tend to live in hamlets that are on the outer edge of the village, and the schools are traditionally near the centre of villages in India. According to a study conducted in 1995, “SC/ST families tend to live in colonies removed by a kilometer or more from the main village. A school in the village within walking distance for the families in the main village would still be at a distance to these children” (MODE Research, 1995, p.25). However, in addition to the physical distance, the ‘social distance’ to the school also is a factor influencing accessibility, particularly when looking from the perspective of social exclusion. As the Public Report on Basic Education (1999, p.17) concluded, “In many areas, villages are divided into separate hamlets, and children from one hamlet may be reluctant or unable to go to school in another hamlet due to caste tensions.” In villages in rural areas, particularly in disadvantaged states such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, people from SC tend to be clustered in particular habitations within villages. Therefore, many children need to travel from the hamlet they live to a neighboring hamlet – which will likely be in the same village – and for SC children this may then involve entering an area which is predominantly inhabited by people from higher castes. If the school is located in the central part of the village (or where higher castes reside) which is most commonly the case in rural areas in India, then this presents a significant social challenge for SC children in accessing school. Additional analysis based on village level data on the location of the school and the caste composition of the various habitations within a village is necessary to gain an understanding of the extent to which this presents a social barrier to accessing education for children from lower castes. This would analysis would be specific to each community.

The Educational Guarantee Scheme in Madhya Pradesh guarantees the availability of a primary school facility within a kilometre within 90 days of receiving a demand for it from a community where there is no such facility, as long as there are at least 25 learners in the age group 6-14 from tribal areas and 40 in non-tribal areas. Evaluations have

concluded that certain areas of the state have benefited disproportionately from this provision and that there has been a sharp reduction in the numbers of out-of-school children (Kabeer, 2006, p.19). However further analysis is necessary before a definitive conclusion can be reached regarding the extent to which this scheme has positively benefited SC children in particular. Furthermore, the earlier discussion regarding social recognition gained from graduating from inclusive schools is important to note, as there is a risk with this approach that separate schools would be established for children from particular castes. Therefore, the social benefit of graduating from an inclusive school (i.e., with children from various castes) would not be realized (Jenkins, 2002).

Another element of social exclusion of SC children from primary education in India also related to the school is the extent to which discrimination is practiced by teachers. As Jeffrey. Jeffery and Jeffery (2008, p.39), who studied social exclusion extensively in Uttar Pradesh, wrote, “the school system often entrenches social inequalities based upon caste, class, gender and religion in UP”. While “open caste discrimination” involving “the formal segregation of lower caste students in classes and maintenance of separate eating arrangements ended within schools in 1960s” (Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery, 2008, p.59), there continues to be reports of discriminatory practices within schools. This includes “teachers marking them down in examinations, preventing them from progressing through school, making demands for bribe money and singling them out for humiliating punishments on account of their caste” (Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery, 2008, p.60).

The PROBE report on educational provision in India “found that there were still villages where higher caste teachers considered children from the untouchable caste as ‘unfit’ for education, making them sit separately from other children and using them to perform menial chores” (Kabeer, 2004, p.40). Quantifiable data on the perception or levels of sensitivity of teachers to caste-based discrimination is not available, however some qualitative studies suggest that teaching practices in the classroom negatively affect SC children (Ramachandran, 2004). This may therefore result in another exclusionary factor from primary school. “Teachers in India are predominantly upper caste and bring their

own understandings of the legitimacy of caste relations into the classroom. Dalit children are expected to run errands and are assigned menial tasks such as sweeping and cleaning the classrooms” (Kabeer, 2004, p.11). Discriminatory teaching practices have two implications which relate to social exclusion. First, as mentioned above, the negative and discriminatory treatment is a reason for children to drop-out of school. Secondly, by reinforcing the discriminatory practice, the children who witness and participate in this practice will be reconfirming the biases from the community. This would then obviously negate any possible positive influence the school could have in promoting more inclusive social norm.

One important means signaling the state’s commitment to making services more accessible, and addressing discriminatory practices within the classroom, is to recruit teachers from marginalized communities. However, not only is the background and caste of teachers important, their level of empathy with children from scheduled caste will also affect their behaviour in the classroom towards traditionally excluded groups, which will have an impact on the education experience of children from scheduled caste. Although outside the scope of this thesis, the importance of teaching practices on social exclusion should be recognized and also the need to better understand the effective means of promoting teaching practices (and underlying beliefs) that respect diversity and promote inclusion is necessary in order to positively influence this cause of social exclusion. Jha and Jhingran (2005, p.69) noted that “teachers’ educational qualifications and their pre-service training are not discriminating factors in teacher performance” in relating to children from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Joint Review Mission of SSA highlighted the importance of training teachers to “address issues of attitude and classroom practice in order to improve the academic performance of SC children” (Department of Education, 2006, p.16).

With the continuing strong cultural influence of caste within society, it is therefore understandable how this overall social system also influences the experience of children from lower castes in the school system. “In societies where major atrocities are committed against Dalit communities every year (in India the estimate is 25,000), and



Dalit pupils are called derogatory names of people who would not learn without beating, it is hardly surprising that fear of teachers and corporal punishment are constraining regular school attendance” (Barr et al., 2007, p.14). One institution in India noted:

We have an appalling body of evidence that suggests that teachers’ preconceptions, bias and behaviour, subtle or overt, conscious or unconscious, operate to discriminate against children of SC/ST background. Low expectations, condescending and downright abusive, unstated assumptions of “deprived or deficient” cultural backgrounds, languages and inherent intellectual deficiencies of SC/ST children, labelling, discriminatory classifications are common and routine. Discrimination including being made to perform menial jobs like sweeping, and being forced to form their own circles, results in the feeling of isolation, alienation and discrimination experienced by SC/ST children (Barr et al., 2007, p.15).

As mentioned above, the level of teachers’ empathy with children from diverse or disadvantaged backgrounds is an important factor in providing an education service to all children, but particularly to children from traditionally marginalized groups. More data needs to be collected and on the background of teachers, including their caste, but perhaps more importantly also their perception of diversity and their understanding of inclusiveness, including their level of skills related to promoting social exclusion. Better understanding of the impact of these characteristics on the education experience of SC children would be informative to policy-making and programming relating to promoting a more inclusive classroom environment. As discussed previously, this qualitative and possibly also quantitative data would be an important component of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system.

The content and relevance of the school system to children from lower castes will also influence whether a child enrolls. A study of “educational performance among children of low caste stone quarry workers in Delhi notes that, along with the indifference of teachers, most of whom came from higher castes, to the needs of the students, the irrelevance of the curriculum contributed to poor outcomes” (Kabeer, 2004, p.41). A comprehensive analysis of the appropriateness of the curriculum to children from all castes in India is beyond the scope of this thesis, but it should be noted that this is another

criterion which would influence a child's experience in school and also their parents' (and their) decision on whether they should continue to attend. There is very little data available about the extent to which dynamics within the classroom contribute to the social exclusion of children and perpetuate exclusionary practices within communities, which I recommend in the conclusion of this thesis is a area for further research in both countries but also more generally. Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery (2008), in their case study of education in Uttar Pradesh show that many schools reproduce exclusionary norms, including those related to gender and caste.

Table 7 indicates the reasons for children never attending or dropping out of school based on the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) -II. Unfortunately, this information is not available for different social groups, however it does offer some insight into the factors which influence this important household decision. The data indicates that cost continues to be a significant barrier to accessing education for a significant proportion of children, which is consistent with other studies including the PROBE study (Probe Team, 1999, p.17). The high cost of education and also the lack of interest in studies, when combined, are given as reasons for dropping out or never attending for 50 per cent of the boys. For girls, cost is also cited as a reason, but the opportunity cost of attending school was also mentioned as a reason; that is, the loss of their contribution to the work at home. While the National Family Health Survey did not collect data related to the specific issues of social exclusion of SC mentioned above, recognizing that children from Scheduled Castes also tend to be poorer than children from other castes, they will be disproportionately affected by the cost of schooling as a barrier to access.

**Table 7: Reasons for never attending or dropping out of school, children aged 6-17 years, NFHS, 1998-99**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Males</b>		<b>Females</b>	
	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>
<b>Never attended School (%)</b>	6.4	13.6	9.0	25.7
- School far away	1.5	4.4	3.4	5.2

- Education not necessary	6.1	7.8	12.9	13.1
- Required for work at home or outside for cash/kind	12.6	17.1	15.4	24.5
- Costs too much	28.5	25.8	30.1	23.8
- Not interested in studies	26.5	25.7	15.7	15.9
- Other	26.5	17.0	19.7	15.4
- Don't know	3.0	2.0	2.8	2.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Dropped out of school (%)</b>	10.6	10.6	11.0	12.6
- School far away	0.3	1.4	1.2	7.5
- Education not necessary	2.4	2.3	5.4	4.3
- Required for work at home or outside for cash/kind	21.9	28.4	20.8	26.2
- Costs too much	15.2	13.3	17.0	11.4
- Not interested in studies	42.5	40.0	30.2	24.8
- Repeated failures	6.0	5.3	6.1	3.7
- Other*	5.9	5.5	14.3	18.2
- Don't know	5.7	3.8	5.1	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

At the household level, the perception of the quality of the education system and the expectations of the return on the investment vis-à-vis the expectations by the parents and students (i.e., will their child get a better job, etc.) are important factors influencing the decision of whether to attend. The level of accessibility of the education system (i.e., distance, cost, etc.) was also reviewed above as an important factor in this decision. As mentioned above, the social status of the child, which is predominantly determined by caste in India, is a 'lens' which contextualizes this decision-making process. "In a socially and economically stratified society like India, decision-making at the individual level is closely linked with collective or group behaviour. Individual preferences and collective or social norms may not move in the same direction" (Jha and Jhingran, 2005, p.26). The additional challenges and constraints to accessing education by scheduled caste children is an example of the individual aspirations of these children and their parents (i.e., wanting to send their children to an inclusive school with children from

other castes) not matching with the often prevailing social norms of the community (i.e., that children from scheduled castes should not be allowed to attend school with children from other castes).

Recent years in India have seen a significant expansion in the availability of private schools, both aided and unaided from public resources. This has a direct bearing on the role of the state in the provision of education and also the broader discussion of the state's capacity to address social exclusion of children. With the expansion in the private school system, the influence of a universal public system diminishes, and the possibility of promoting an inclusive school system which reaches all children correspondingly diminishes. Data are limited on the actual number of private schools and also the numbers of children attending these schools in India. At the primary level, according to a study funded by the World Bank, 6 per cent of rural children and 19 per cent of urban children study in private unaided schools (i.e., do not receive public resources) and 31 per cent of children study in private aided schools (i.e., receive public resources) (Ramachandran, 2002).

Among the reasons for the growth of private schools is the reported decline in government-school quality (poor infrastructure, shortage of teachers, lack of accountability of government schools leading to teacher absenteeism and negligence). This gives way to a positive preference for private schools, even though they may have a relatively poor infrastructure, less qualified teachers and are definitely more expensive (Ramachandran, 2002, 57).

The significant expansion in the availability of private schools in both rural and urban areas has the potential of further widening the divide between castes, as children from Scheduled Castes cannot afford – or may be unwelcome at – private schools. This is an important area that requires further study. From the relatively little information that is available, it is possible to conclude that the SC children predominantly attend the poorly functioning government schools or alternative schools (Jha and Jhingran, 2005), whereas children from other castes tend to attend schools of higher quality. This pattern resulted in one district education official commenting that the public school system is slowly turning into a system for SC children only (Jha and Jhingran, 2005).

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, the quality of primary education in India continues to be a significant issue. This is perhaps even a greater problem in schools in poor locations or with a higher proportion of children from lower castes. Although there is limited data which compares the performance of schools based on the composition of the student body related to caste, there is evidence that, for example, that “higher rates of teacher absenteeism were reported when children were mainly from Dalit and tribal communities” (Kabeer, 2004, p.11). This imbalance in the quality of the education system mirrors, and therefore reinforces and reproduces, the discriminatory practices in society.

Studies of high drop out rates among children from poorer or from lower caste households in India point to the ‘deplorable’ conditions of many of their schools in terms of the adequacy of the buildings, the ratio of teachers to student, the number of toilets, and availability of separate toilets for girls, the availability of seating, the supply of text books and so on (Kabeer, 2004, p.41).

Similar to the earlier discussion on the interrelationship of vulnerabilities, a difference in the quality and performance of schools with high student populations from lower caste can not automatically be attributed exclusively to caste, as these schools also tend to be in poorer and remote locations, have economically poor student bodies, and other factors which would also negatively affect their performance.

### **Summary of Policy and Programmatic Responses**

The policy and programmatic response of the Government of India is based on an acknowledgement of the disadvantaged status of the SC population in education and also a recognition of the importance to address it. This is obviously a clear indication that the Government is aware of the problem and openly commits itself to resolving it. The National Policy on Education (1986) declared “The central focus in the SC’s educational development is their equalization with the non-SC population in all stages and levels of education” (GOI, 1986). The policy includes various strategies such as providing incentives, scholarships, reservations to children from lower castes, and also promotes the

recruitment of teachers from lower castes. The policy also attempts to address other issues such as the location of school buildings, and supporting micro-planning processes and monitoring processes to promote the enrolment, retention and successful completion of SC students (GOI, 1986). One can see that there have therefore been policy pronouncements in India for over two decades that reconfirm the government's commitment to addressing the disadvantaged status of SC children. A constitutional amendment was passed in 2002 making free and compulsory education a fundamental right for children aged 6–14 years. This was a further acknowledgement of the commitment of the Government to realising its own obligations to realising the right of all children to education. Acknowledging the right to education in the Constitution is one of the key policy level commitments that can lead to the allocation of sufficient resources and other measures to realize each child's right to education (Tomasevski, 2006). The effectiveness of the response, and the other factors that influence the achievement of this objective, including within communities and households, is an area requiring further analysis.

In the Approach Paper to the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan of the Government of India, which provides the overall framework for the Government's work from 2007-2011, the Government reiterated its commitment to addressing disparities in education between castes. The Approach Paper states the following:

Development and empowerment of socially disadvantaged groups is a commitment enshrined in the Constitution, and education is the most effective instrument of social empowerment. Schemes for the educational uplift of the SCs and STs have borne fruit although the gap between the general population and SCs and STs are still at unacceptable levels....Some minorities have fallen far behind the national average in education. It will be necessary to go to the root of the problem and examine the reasons for the decline so that remedial measures can be taken during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan. (Planning Commission, 2006, 64)

There are two basic approaches to addressing social exclusion in education: targeting excluded groups with supplementary service or focusing on universal improvements of the system. "Universalist approaches are essential to building a sense of social solidarity

and citizenship” (Kabeer, 2004, p.14). Targeted programmes have been interpreted as a means of compensating for the government’s inability to deliver a universal service, and may result in exacerbating the marginalization of those they are intending to reach. This may particularly be the case if the interventions result in the labeling of particular groups; fuel discriminatory tensions within a community; or fail to act as a temporary action or bridge for socially excluded children to access mainstream education services. Kabeer (2004, p.16) concludes that such approaches “need to go beyond ‘ameliorative’ approaches that address the symptoms of the problem to ‘transformative’ approaches that address its causes.”

The various schemes and programmes that have been introduced in India to bridge the divide between SC children and other children in primary school follow a diverse range in approaches. The government is unique in its high level of capacity relative to many developing countries, including Mozambique, both in terms of the amount of available public resources and also the level of human resources at all levels. It therefore has the potential to positively counteract the societal norms that discriminate against SC children in the education system. As mentioned above, from the perspective of the human-rights based approach, the government is obliged to act to ensure the full realization of every child’s right to education.

The national and state governments are both involved in managing the implementation of a large-scale primary education programme entitled the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA), which aims to achieve universal elementary education by 2010. Tuition fees for government schools have been abolished in all states up to what is referred to as the ‘upper primary level’, which is grades 6-8. Most of the states have also abolished tuition fees for SC/ST students up to senior secondary level (Barr et al., 2007). As mentioned above, the SSA programme focuses predominantly on increasing access and quality of education by following a universalist approach, but also has certain elements of the strategy which are intended to specifically promote access of SC and ST children to primary school. The special schemes to promote access to education for SC children are implemented in various states and to varying degrees and include the following:

- Free supply of textbooks and stationery at all stages of school education
- Free uniforms to children in government approved hostels and Ashram schools, and in some states for children
- Free education at all levels
- Pre-matric stipend and scholarships to students middle and/or high school stage
- Special scheme of pre-matric scholarships for children of castes and families engaged in occupations like scavenging, tanning and flaying of animal skin (almost exclusively done by people from Schedule castes)
- Girls and boys hostels for SC/ST students and lodging facilities in hostels of backward classes including SC/ST

The above initiatives are focused on improving the supply side (i.e., making schools more accessible, improving the quality or providing a supplementary service for SC children) and also promote greater demand for education (i.e., by providing incentives). Recognizing the social benefit of an inclusive education – in which children from diverse backgrounds study together – and the potential transformative influence this can have on the related social norms in a society, I later conclude with the recognition of the risks and negative implications of establishing a separate and unique education system for disadvantaged children. It should be noted that many of these initiatives are designed to address challenges related to regularly attending school, such as material deprivation or poverty, as opposed to the social constraints which are clearly evident. While it is noted that various deprivations are overlapping (i.e., material and income poverty and also social deprivations) it will be shown that initiatives that only address material deprivations or income poverty will not adequately address all of the determinants that exclude children from school and therefore will not realize the policy objective of universal access to primary education.

During the 1990s, the focus of the large-scale District Primary Education Programme, and more recently the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Universal Primary Education Campaign), was on increasing the budget allocation to primary education and improving the quality



of teaching, which were regarded as two key constraints to achieving universal participation. As mentioned above, this approach is consistent with the traditional, prevalent approach of focusing almost exclusively on the supply-side of the problem. While recognizing that achieving universal elementary education in India will require a significant increase in financial allocation, it is also evident both from the experience in India but also based on global experience that financial support alone will not address all the constraints to attending school for marginalized groups and therefore will not automatically result in universal access. One of the key objectives of the SSA is that “enrolment of children of SC and ST will be near parity with that of other groups” (Department of Education, 2006). This is a modest objective as it focuses on ensuring the enrolment of children rather than completion or reaching a certain level of learning achievement, and also mentions “near parity” rather than parity between groups. Recognizing the constraints which SC children face to accessing primary education, focusing only on the supply side constraints will not resolve the challenge of social exclusion for all children.

However, recognizing the poorer economic and social conditions in areas predominantly inhabited by SC children, it is reasonable to conclude that additional resources are needed in these areas in order to overcome their disadvantaged status. However, it is important to distinguish between additional resources in order to address the disadvantage status of these areas and resources used to establish a parallel education system in these areas targeting SC children. In India, 15% and 7.5% of the budget of the Department of Elementary Education & Literacy and Secondary & Higher Education have been allocated for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes respectively (Barr et al, 2007). These additional resources are directed towards particular districts that were identified as ‘special focus districts’ and therefore receive additional attention by the Government of India and also by States/Union level government in the implementation of programmes/schemes to improve the education status of children in these disadvantaged areas. One specific component of this additional focus and assistance is providing boarding facilities for girls. “Under the Scheme of Strengthening of Boarding and Hostel Facilities for girl students of Secondary & Higher Secondary Schools, preference is given to girls’ hostels

located in educationally backward districts, particularly those predominantly inhabited by SC, ST and educationally backward communities” (Barr et al, 2007, p.23). These initiatives are therefore addressing both the material aspects of their disadvantaged status and also the social capacity issues that have been discussed above.

Targeted programmes in India can, however, be interpreted as a means of compensating for government weakness in delivering on the much preferred (and also a key government obligation from a human rights-based perspective) provision of universal services. Such an approach runs the risk of further marginalizing those they are intending to reach, particularly if the programme results in the provision of a sub-standard service to socially excluded groups or further labels particular groups. An important feature of any compensatory education service would be the extent to which they act as a ‘bridge’ to the ‘mainstream’ system. An analysis of the education system in India by Sayed et al., (2007, p.10) raised particular concerns about the “fragmentation of provision under the umbrella ‘Sarva Shiksha Abdhayan’ and the increase in the range of schools being made available through public resources, and their differing quality”. Kabeer (2006, p.16) concluded that such approaches “need to go beyond ‘ameliorative’ approaches that address the symptoms of the problem to ‘transformative’ approaches that address its causes.” Further analysis on the effectiveness of the various programmes and interventions in India in addressing the various dynamics that are related to the social exclusion of SC children from primary school is recommended as an area for further research.

Various States in India provide additional incentives or special provisions for SCs including financial schemes, scholarships, special hostels, concessions in fees and grants for books. Out of 43,000 scholarships for secondary school for talented children from rural areas, 13,000 scholarships are awarded to SC/ST students (de Haan, 2005). Out of 1000 scholarships, 225 scholarships are exclusively reserved for SC/ST students under the National Talent Search Scheme (de Haan, 2005). This is intended to also provide an incentive to enrol at the primary level (Barr et al. 2007, p.24). Non-cash transfer initiatives such as provision of school meals, which are implemented in India at scale,

have had a mixed impact. The programme “has three objectives: first to provide food for poor children, second an incentive to come to school, and third to engage in social engineering – to try to overcome taboos of untouchability where Dalit children were mixed with others” (Barr et al. 2007, p.25). Providing mid-day meals has been noted as one of the reasons for the increases in enrolment in India, although there is some anecdotal evidence that it has led to children only coming to school at the time of the day when the meal is being served and then leaving afterwards. There is also anecdotal evidence of cases where head teachers inflate attendance figures in order to receive more funds to provide the mid-day meal – as the amount of money provided for food to the school is calculated based on the number of children regularly attending.

The mid-day meal scheme is designed to address income poverty as a constraint to regular attendance of primary school. However, certain children who do not have the ‘social capacity’ required to participate in the scheme may not benefit – and it may actually have the opposite effect from what was intended. A significant issue related to mid-day meals is that there have been instances cited where Dalit children have been excluded from this service within the school. Cultural practices related to food are particularly sensitive to caste based discrimination in India, and the mid-day meal can result in the further exclusion of scheduled caste children from school. Studies have cited that when an SC is the cook, children from the dominant caste will not eat (Thorat, 2006). Namala (2006, p.57) has cited a number of different forms of exclusion of SC children related to the mid-day meal scheme: “SCs are excluded as cooks and helpers for midday meals programmes, children experience discrimination in seating arrangements while being served food, and they are given inferior meals and insufficient quantity of food.” Indicators that measure various elements of processes, including information on the implementation of the programme and the corresponding results, need to be included in an education monitoring system in order to better understand the impact of initiatives such as the mid-day meal scheme on the level of social exclusion. Recognizing the stated policy objectives of the Government summarized early, initiatives such as mid-day meal schemes need to be implemented in a manner which also addresses exclusion, including ensuring that there is not a certain level of social capability that is required in order for a

child to participate in the programme. It should be noted that a minimum level of capacity of the education system, at school level and other related levels including within the community, district, and also relating to the management of the monitoring and evaluation system, is necessary in order to ensure compliance to the standards once established.

The analysis of the trends related to education outcomes by the different castes shows that while certain measures have produced positive results related to enabling SC children to enrol and complete primary education, they have not sufficiently addressed all constraints which would result in parity with children from other castes. It is therefore necessary to analyse the dynamics and processes that relate to the level of social exclusion in order to effectively plan and implement programmes that positively influence these dynamics.

### **General observations**

Policies that seek to address social exclusion are of two kinds, those relating to the material constraints such as distance to school (and by implication lack of income by parents for transportation) and those that address the social relations relating to social exclusion. This review suggests that most of the policies are directed at the former and not the latter, and therefore some socially excluded children continue to be unable to realize their right to education.

Explanations to date of educational disadvantage in India often focus on material aspects of poverty and therefore the supply dimensions of the problem which are more commonly understood and can be largely solved by providing additional resources (Ramachandran, 2004). A broader approach however is needed based on an analysis of disaggregated data related to the social exclusion of children. The interplay between life situations, school functioning, classroom processes, parental aspirations and other related factors all have an influence on educational outcomes of disadvantaged groups (Jha and Jhingran 2005, p.12). Therefore, a deeper and more context specific understanding is necessary in order to formulate a sufficiently comprehensive policy and corresponding

programmatic response in order to effectively address the social exclusion of Schedule Caste children in India.

The value of receiving an education, particularly for disadvantaged groups from lower castes in India, is not only the benefit that is derived from the learning itself, but also includes a certain level of social recognition, or social capital, which is a result of graduating from a recognized, socially inclusive institution. This formal recognition by society can help to address the underlying social norms that result in the continued exclusion of certain groups from a community based institution such as a school. Education also presents an opportunity to learn certain socially accepted behaviors that may also counteract exclusionary practices. For example, as Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery (2008, p.67) wrote based on their research in Northern India, “educated young men spoke of the capacity of education to instill good manners, refinement, moral strength, and right conduct.” They summarize as one of their conclusions that it was possible to identify “powerful local narratives that link education to social capabilities. This included, according to the young men researched, a sense of self-worth....and the ability to generate embodied capacities of comportment, feeling and speech” (Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery, 2008, p.76).

Achieving a certain level of education is widely recognized as valuable within a community and therefore has the potential to strengthen one’s social capital, and also undermine the value of caste as the basis of assigning a person’s worth. As Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery (2008, p.203) concluded, young people interviewed in Northern India observed that education is attractive “because it provides an achieved model of success distinct from ascribed ideas of social value.” They continued that it was becoming widely acknowledged that “education rather than caste or religion is the most appropriate basis for social recognition and respect in a ‘modern age’” (Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery, 2008, p.203).

I have mentioned above that an effective monitoring system needs to be established that measures both the quantitative and qualitative data related to the education system, and

must be disaggregated sufficiently in order to assess the extent of exclusion by caste. “In India, strengthening data management systems which provide disaggregated data by caste, gender and other characteristics at local level is necessary. This data must be complemented by data on dropouts and on those who have never attended school” (Ramachandran, 2004, p. 23). However, this level of disaggregation is not included in either the routine government monitoring system entitled the Education Management Information System (EMIS), or the District Information System for Education (DISE), which was developed to monitor the results of the large-scale SSA programme described above. It is also not included in the periodic surveys that collect information on education indicators (Barr et al., 2007). The lack of sufficient level of information prevents the effective monitoring of the dynamics related to exclusion that is necessary to enable the ‘claims-holders’, such as SC children and their parents, to ensure that the obligations of duty-bearers, such as for example teachers to teach inclusively, are being fulfilled. The dearth of information also enables governments at various levels to falsely claim that progress is being made – as they can present the overall positive trends in certain indicators related to education, including for example an increase in the enrolment rate, without acknowledging the continued disadvantaged status of SC children.

With the significant increase in public resources to primary education in India, and the increased attention more generally both of senior decision-makers and the public, there is a unique opportunity to transform the education system in India including inducing fundamental changes in the opportunities accorded to socially disadvantaged populations in the country. An improved education system is one of the key prerequisites to breaking the cycle of poverty and the high levels of deprivation of scheduled caste children in India summarized above. The large-scale education programmes in India have tended to focus on improving access and quality of education by increasing the level of public resources to education and also addressing the poor quality of teaching. It is however now widely recognized that finances alone will not ensure regular attendance of the most disadvantaged children. Explanations of educational disadvantage have tended to focus on the supply dimensions of the problem, which often emphasizes the necessity of providing additional resources (Ramachandran, 2004). A broader approach however is needed for education policy and the resulting programmes to effectively address social

exclusion of SC children from primary school. Such an approach needs to influence the various inter-related decision-making processes that influence the potential of all children to realize their right to education. This needs to be based on an accurate and comprehensive understanding by the government and other duty-bearers on the local context and the relevant dynamics that continue to result in the social exclusion of certain children from primary education.

## **Chapter 5: Social Exclusion from Primary Education in Mozambique**

The Republic of Mozambique is situated in the south eastern part of Africa and has a population of close to twenty million. The country was a Portuguese colony from the fifteenth century until it attained political independence in 1975 following 10 years of armed struggle. Peace was however short lived as a civil war began in the early 1980s which lasted until 1992. The infrastructure of the country was decimated as a result of these conflicts, requiring the economic and social infrastructure to be rebuilt. Since the early 1990s, the country has witnessed significant economic growth, albeit from a very low base.

The population density in Mozambique is relatively low, with about 20.1 inhabitants per square kilometer according to the 1997 Census. Mozambique is a multicultural and multilingual country with 18 main Bantu languages (Passos, 2005). It is predominantly a rural country, with about 71.4 percent of the Mozambican population living in many small settlements in remote locations. Many of these locations continue to be difficult to access due the poor transport network. The official language is Portuguese and is the principle language of instruction in public schools. Portuguese is spoken by only about 30 percent of the population, who mainly reside in urban areas.

Mozambique remains one of the poorest countries in the world. It was ranked by the 2007 Human Development Index as 172 out of 177 countries. As a result of the rapid progress from a very low base in the early 1990s, Mozambique has the potential to achieve several of the targets related to the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. However, as I will later show, progress towards targets which require systemic and qualitative change in order to accelerate progress, such as the completion rates of primary education, “remain more distant prospects due to the sheer depth of poverty and underdevelopment from which the nation is emerging” (United Nations, 2006, p.37). The natural disasters of recent years have posed an additional burden on the social service and the government in general. The frequent floods and cyclones have not only caused significant level of infrastructure damage, but also place additional financial burden on the government.



They have also had a direct negative impact on education of children, as there have been several instances in the recent past in which educational opportunities of children have been interrupted in the affected areas for extended period of time.

The percentage of people living below the poverty line has been reduced by 22 per cent between 1996/97 and 2002/3, from 69.4 percent to 54.1 percent, but remains high even when compared to other developing countries (United Nations, 2006). However, this overall decrease in poverty did not benefit all households equally. One important distinction can be seen between male-headed and female-headed households, with the poverty rate of the former reducing by 26 per cent from 1996/97 to 2002/03) compared to only 6 per cent in the latter households for the same time period (United Nations, 2006). Walker et al., (2004) found that widow-headed households (45 percent of all female-headed households) are particularly disadvantaged, earning on average 30 per cent less than male-headed households. This directly relates to the discussion of social exclusion of children because orphaned children, a traditionally excluded group in Mozambique as will be shown later in this thesis, are largely found in female headed households (United Nations, 2006).

There has been considerable progress in some of the key indicators in education during the recent past. However, it should be noted that information on the performance of the education system in Mozambique is relatively limited, particularly disaggregated information by gender, socio-economic categories or by regions. The two main sources of data are household surveys, with the latest with education data being the Demographic Health Survey of 2003, and routinely collected data from the education system which produces information on an annual basis. The latter information source, like many other routine monitoring systems in developing countries, has some inherent inconsistencies and biases as the information is collected by education officials who themselves are also accountable for the performance of the system and therefore have an incentive to exaggerate the progress being made.

In Mozambique primary education is free and compulsory, although it will be shown that providing access to a quality education service for all children remains a challenge. The primary school system is divided into two levels, namely, the lower primary that consists of five years of schooling (Grades 1 to 5) and upper primary which comprises two years (Grades 6 and 7). Children are supposed to enroll in grade one at the age of 6 years, but many children continue to enroll late. Primary schools generally operate in two shifts, and because of the shortage of schools at this level, some primary schools operate three shifts in the same day.

Since the end of the conflict in 1992, there have been impressive increases in gross and net enrolment ratios at both primary and secondary level. “In the period 1992 to 2005, the number of learners in primary school trebled, from approximately 1.3 million to over 3.8 million” (United Nations, 2006). Under the Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP I) implemented during the period 1999-2005, considerable progress was achieved especially in terms of an increase in enrolment at all levels, with primary school 1<sup>st</sup> level (so called EP1 consisting of 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grades) enrolment growing by 65%. Between 1999 and 2005, EP1 and EP2 school attendance increased from 2.3 to 4 million pupils, and the number of schools increased from 6,500 to 9,500 (Equipa, 2007). The gross admission rate in Class 1 went from 104% to 160% in the same period.

In the more recent past, the net enrolment ratio (NER) at primary level has risen from 69 per cent (66 per cent girls/72 per cent boys) in 2003, to 88 per cent (86 per cent girls/90 per cent boys) in 2006 (Ministry of Education, 2007). In 2007, the net enrolment rate for 6-year old children was 69.2 per cent. The significant increase in enrolment has been accompanied by a narrowing in the gap between boys and girls. “The absolute gender gap in enrolment in EP1 decreased from a 25 percentage point difference in Gross Enrolment Rate in 1999 to 17 percentage point difference in Gross Enrolment Rate in 2005” (United Nations, 2006).

However, the progress in the level of access to schooling – seen in an increase in enrolment rates – has not been matched by improvements in the quality of education

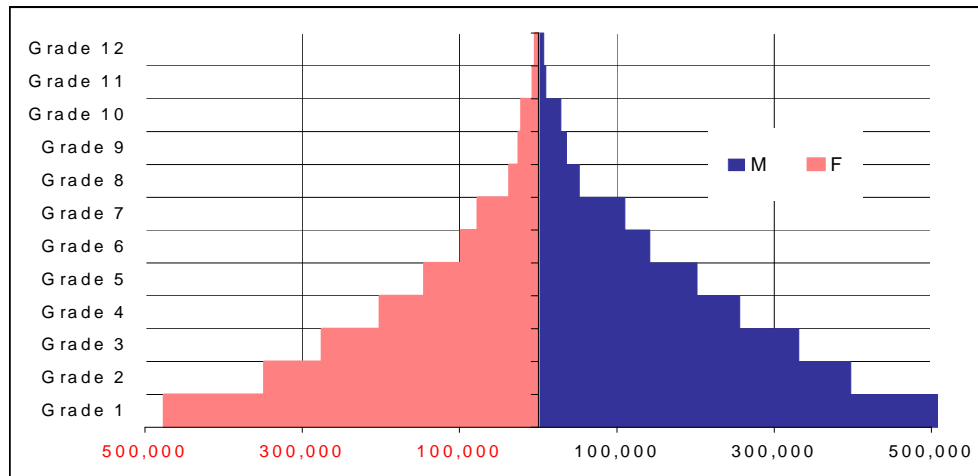
being provided. As of 2005, the repetition rates were 11 per cent and drop-out rates were 8 per cent, indicating a significant challenge in the efficiency of the school system. More than half of the primary school age children leave before having completed Grade 5, and only 35 per cent complete middle-school (EP2), which is the second level of primary school consisting of grade 6 and 7 (United Nations, 2006). The completion rate of primary school, a key indicator for measuring the quality of education, also showed that girls were significantly disadvantaged, with only 28 per cent girls completing lower primary school compared to 40 per cent of boys. In addition, the level of school attendance remains very low, with the latest available survey data (DHS 2003) reporting a net primary school attendance rate of 60 per cent (57 per cent girls compared to 63 per cent boys). The disparities between boys and girls were particularly acute in rural areas, with only 48 per cent of girls attending primary school compared to 57 per cent of boys. How the poor quality of education excludes children will be further discussed later in this thesis.

Entry into middle-school (EP2) has increased substantially. The transition from EP1 and EP2, however, continues to be a major challenge. Many schools are not able to offer the complete 7 year education cycle. For this reason, in order to progress to EP2, pupils have to travel long distances from their homes or attend boarding schools which is a major constraint particularly for girls. In addition to disparities between girls and boys, there are also significant disparities between regions (North-Centre-South) and provinces, and also between children living in rural and urban areas.

The gains in enrolment in the recent past have been the strongest for girls, leading to a significant narrowing of the gender gap in primary enrolment, especially in the early grades. In 2005, girls represented 46.4 % of EP1 pupils. The gender disparity has been virtually eliminated in Class 1 admissions. In 2005, 48% of children enrolled in Class 1 were girls. However, girls continue to drop-out more than boys throughout the primary cycle – resulting in only 43% of the total number of children graduating from EP1 being girls (Equipa, 2007).

The enrolment pyramid captured in Figure 1 compiled from the data in 2005, illustrates the challenge of high drop-outs, beginning in the very early years of primary cycle.

**Figure 1: The Enrolment Pyramid: 2005, public, daytime courses (MEC, 2006)**



Although there has been a significant increase in the number of schools since the end of the civil war in 1992, with the yearly construction of an average of approximately 500 new schools and the recruitment of 3,500 new teachers, many of the existing school buildings are in very poor condition and this growth has not been matched by increases in investment in the quality of education. In 2005, an estimated 70 per cent of schools were without water and sanitation facilities (Ministry of Education, 2006). “The absence of safe water and separate toilets can be a major reason why girls never attend school – or drop out of school” (UNICEF, 2004, p.55). One survey found that in 73 percent of the schools there was no basic school library (Pessos, 2005). The extent to which the quality of the infrastructure is a ‘push factor’ resulting in children dropping out of school will be discussed in detail later in this thesis.

The rapid increase in primary school enrolment has increased the demand for qualified teachers. At lower primary school level (EP1), in 2006 there was an average of one teacher for every 74 learners (up from 65:1 in 2000), and only 58 per cent of these teachers had formal teacher training (68 per cent at EP2) (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2007). The Ministry of Education and Culture is currently training 5,000 new

teachers a year out of an annual requirement of 7,000, which means that 2,000 untrained teachers must be recruited to fill the gap. Teacher training, provided by different programmes, institutions and models, faces many internal challenges including a lack of qualified and experienced teacher educators, out-of-date teaching manuals and limited resources. Absenteeism and teacher mortality due to HIV/AIDS have exacerbated the shortage of adequately trained teachers.

In Mozambique, there continues to be the challenge of children being older than is expected at each grade level. At 11 years of age, the expectation of the system is for the child to be attending grade 6 in EP2. However, “only 4 per cent of 11 year old children attending school are in the sixth grade. The overwhelming majority (95 per cent) are still attending lower primary education (EP1), with most in grade 3” (United Nations, 2006, p.147). This has significant implications for children’s learning outcomes, as children studying in the same class are at very different levels of cognitive development but are being taught in the same way. One of the reasons for children being older than expected is the very high grade repetition rate (79.9%). The other reason is late enrolment, especially in the rural areas (Passos, p.57). An important factor that also contributes to poor performance of children in primary school is the low level of access to organized early childhood development programmes. Pre-school education is provided in Mozambique in crèches and kindergartens that are almost entirely private or managed by community based organisations. Recognizing that pre-school education is not compulsory and predominantly only available in urban areas, only a small percentage of this target age group participates in formal pre-school education.

The National System of Education (SNE) was introduced in 1983 and was the first system to be designed by Mozambicans after independence. Before 1975, while Mozambique remained a colony of Portugal, the education system consisted of missionary schools, public schools and private schools. The missionary schools catered for the “natives”, mainly in the rural areas. The public and private schools catered predominantly for the Portuguese and were located mainly in the urban areas. One of the characteristics of the pre-independence education system was that it was very selective,

which as described above has been retained in the current education system with the continued high drop-out rates. Out of every 1,000 pupils enrolled in the first grade in the early 1970s, only 77 successfully completed lower primary school (up to grade 5) (Arnaldo, 2007).

### **Overview of Disparities in Primary Education in Mozambique**

In 2006, there were more than 650,000 primary school aged children out of school (Ministry of Education, 2007). The level of education achievement of a particular child varies in Mozambique depending on various factors including where he/she lives, gender, age, household income and the level of education of the household head among other factors. I have earlier suggested that social exclusion of primary education is a result of the dynamics within and between the following three levels: the school, community and household, within the broader context of the government's obligations to realizing the right to education for all children. There are a multitude of factors, including social, economic and cultural related, that influence whether a child enrolls, attends, is retained and ultimately completes primary school with the desired level of learning outcomes. There are certain cultural features in Mozambique which are particular to the various regions in the country. As Sanchez (2007, p.3) wrote,

Socio-cultural factors such as traditional practices vis-à-vis dropout and repetition rates are more significant in the North and Centre than in the South. Dropping out of school after initiation rites is common in the Northern and Central provinces of the country. Early marriage, particularly for girls, is another factor affecting retention and completion, as is dropping out of school – especially boys – due to migration to South Africa or other countries for economic reasons.

Understanding the extent of the influence of cultural factors that are unique to the various regions of the country on the decision to attend school is an area for further research.

Significant geographical disparities exist between provinces, and also between districts within provinces across many key education indicators including enrolment, completion and drop-out rates (MEC, 2007). There are also differences in the availability and quality

of teachers, which has been noted to be substantially lower in the central and northern provinces than in the south (Equipa, 2007).

Poverty is prevalent in all provinces in Mozambique and remains as one of the most important factors to explain the disadvantaged status of some households regarding education. Various household surveys in Mozambique have consistently confirmed the direct correlation between the level of wealth of a household and both school enrolment and attendance of a child (United Nations, 2006). As mentioned above, there are multiple interrelated factors such as the social, cultural and community factors, including for example parents' education level, premature marriages, malnutrition, poor health status that influences a child's chances of attending school. The emergence of HIV/AIDS, which is placing additional pressures on families, often has a negative impact, particularly on girls.

Poverty has an impact at all levels, including the household level, by affecting the decision-making patterns by and between household members. In poor families the benefits of education are often weighed against the scarcity of resources and the opportunity costs of foregoing child work. Parents in rural areas may also be skeptical about the long-term benefits of schooling, given the acute shortage of secondary (and tertiary) schools in rural areas. Children living in households in which the household head has no education are over nine times as likely to suffer from education deprivation compared with children in households in which the head of the household has a secondary level or higher education (United Nations, 2006).

As can be expected in a country with such high levels of poverty, the cost of education, including the need to purchase learning materials, remains a significant barrier to access among the poorest children (World Bank, 2004). Although assessing intra-household inequality is difficult, there are indications that the children who are not directly related to the head of household may be discriminated against in the allocation of resources within the household. Recognizing that girls, orphaned and vulnerable children are often

discriminated against in the intra-household allocations, they are also likely to be the first to be withdrawn from formal education due to cost (UNICEF, 2007).

With both the increase coverage in the provision of basic learning materials, and also the abolishment of school fees and other additional costs, such as a fee for taking matriculation exams, many of the costs to access schooling have been reduced since 2004. This has therefore addressed one of the barriers to access to education. However, according to a study (Sanchez, 2007) that focused on parents' perception of the access to schools, there were two key demand-side constraints which still negatively affected access: the cost of uniforms and also the continued costs associated with school materials. Although uniforms are not obligatory – that is, cannot be a reason to exclude children from school according to official policy – they continue to be worn by almost all children in Mozambique and remain costly for many parents. Additional consumable school materials, such as pens, pencils and paper, also must be purchased by parents as the quantities distributed by the Government are insufficient. For very poor households, especially in rural areas, the sum of all direct costs is still a factor when deciding whether to send their children to school. The cost of schooling, therefore, continues to be a factor excluding children from school, including the direct cost of schooling and also the opportunity cost of not having the child at home to help with household chores and other work (World Bank, 2004). Furthermore, with increasing numbers of orphans resulting in households caring for additional children, the decision is not only whether to send your child to school but also deciding how many children from your household should attend school. This will be further discussed later in this thesis.

There are a variety of factors which result in girls having disadvantaged status compared to boys in Mozambique. Overall, the completion rate of girls continues to be low. “In 2003 almost half of the districts had completion rates of less than 20% for girls in EP1” (Equipa, 2007, p.2). “On the demand side, the high drop-out rate of girls in these regions is associated with the long distances they have to travel to reach school, incomplete schools, bad infrastructure, direct and indirect costs (including payments to teachers and opportunity payments), matters of quality (teaching language), and the limited number of



teachers” (Equipa, 2007, p.2). There are also supply-side constraints that have been summarized above, including the low prevalence of qualified teachers, the high teacher/pupil ratio, and the poor infrastructure of many schools, which also in some circumstances have a greater impact on girls than boys – for example the absence of adequate water and sanitation facilities.

The benefit to society of ensuring access to quality education for girls has been well researched, including the positive influence on reducing child mortality, and improving the health and nutrition of subsequent generations of children (UNICEF, 2004). However, this does not necessarily translate into the decision to send girls to school at the household level. That is, households may under-value the benefits of educating girls when considering the potential positive contribution at the community and societal level. The perception of the parents of the quality of the education is an important determinant in the decision of whether to send a child to school. According to a survey by the World Bank in 2004, 32 per cent of parents in Mozambique felt that the school curriculum lacked relevance (World Bank, 2004, p.29). Although increases in enrolment have resulted in a decrease in the gender gap between girls and boys; girls remain disadvantaged in the central and northern regions of the country. While the gender difference in the enrolment rates of boys and girls in the southern province has almost been eliminated, it remains at more than 10% in the central provinces of Sofala, Nampula and Zambezi.

Cultural factors, such as early marriage and the responsibility of girls of taking care of siblings or relatives in cases of illness or other circumstances, is also an important reason for girls dropping out of school in Mozambique. This relates to the overall perception of care-givers of the value of educating girls. According the baseline survey in the three districts in 2007, based on a question asked about the education of girls, only 56.8 per cent of household-heads had a positive attitude towards the education of girls. However, Table 1 shows that male household heads in Maganja da Costa show a higher positive attitude relative to female household heads, which could be a result of the relatively low education attainment among women resulting in reduced motivation of the benefit of

education. This has been a factor identified in a study of barriers to the education of girls in Zambézia province (Justiniano et al., 2005).

**Table 1:** Percentage of households heads in Maganja da Costa with positive perception of girls attending and concluding schools (data from Arnaldo, 2007)

<b>Head of the Household</b>	<b>Percent of household heads who respond positively to question about the need to attend and conclude schooling in the same way for girls and boys</b>
Male	66.2
Female	40.9
<b>Total in all districts</b>	<b>56.8</b>

There are important dynamics at the community and school level which affect the chances of a girl attending school. As mentioned above, very few schools have sufficient water and sanitation facilities, which has a disproportionate negative affect on the chances of girls to attend school (UNICEF, 2004). The low literacy levels among Mozambican women is an indication of the lower level of importance of educating a girl child in these households. Poverty, cultural patterns, parents' perception of schooling, early pregnancy and early marriage were identified as barriers to the education of girls. Furthermore, the education level of the parents was a determinant in encouraging or discouraging education attainment of girls (Justiniano et al., 2005).

The Demographic and Health Survey (2003) indicated a correlation between children who are not currently attending school (either never enrolled or dropped-out) and the level of the education of head of the household. Table 2 below compares the percentage of children not enrolled by the level of education of the household head. The table shows that in households in which the head of household has no education, 38 per cent of children do not attend school compared to only 4 per cent of children living in a household in which the head of the household has secondary level or higher.

**Table 2:** Percentage of children not attending school by level of education of household head

<b>Level of Education of Household Head</b>	<b>Percentage of Children not attending school</b>
No education	38
Primary Education	20
Secondary and Higher	4

As part of an evaluation of an education programme undertaken by the Ministry of Education to improve the quality of education and enhance access, a sample of students were questioned to assess their perceptions of the constraints to accessing school and why some children dropped-out (Equipa, 2007). Some of the main issues that were raised were the lack or shortage of food; bureaucratic difficulties in the enrolment process and limited access to school materials. The long distance between school and home was also raised and the fear of violence from teachers, particularly for girls. The lack of interest of parents and children in education and involvement in income generation activities were also cited. The data was unfortunately not disaggregated by characteristics of children (i.e., by gender, or location, or other household characteristics), so it is not possible to understand how these challenges are relevant for certain children. This is an area for further research.

A nation-wide survey conducted in 2003 (Passos et al., 2005) with students provided insights into the situation in their homes and shed light on some of the determinants within households that influence the chances of a child attending school. Table 3 summarizes some of these key factors. As mentioned above, the level of poverty is one of the key characteristic cited as a determinant of a child attending school. A proxy was used for household income by assessing the level of household assets. Data was also collected related to the education level of the parents, and whether there were books present in the home. Table 3 indicates that there was a wide range in these indicators across the provinces in Mozambique and also that the most disadvantaged provinces in

terms of education status are also those with the poorest households, lowest levels of education of parents and also lowest percentage of households with books.

The survey also asked a further question regarding whether pupils had three meals a day, although the nutritional value of each meal was not assessed. The question asked whether a child had a morning meal, a mid-day meal and an evening meal, and sought to establish how many times a week they ate each of the meals. A score of 3 meant that they did not eat at all while a score of 12 indicated that they ate every meal each day.

Regarding the parental education of the Grade 6 pupils, separate questions were asked of the mother's and father's educational level. The results were summed up and divided by 2. A score of '0' indicated that neither parent had received any formal school education and a score of 6 indicated that both parents had completed senior secondary and had had some tertiary education. The average was 3.0 for Mozambique and the variation among the regions was relatively small.

**Table 3.** Means, percentages, and sampling errors for the pupil age, sex, and home-related characteristics (MEC, 2005 and Passos, 2005).

Region	Net Ratio*		Enrolment		Age		Books at home		Possessions at home		Meals		Parent education	
					(months)		(number)		(index)		(index)		(index)	
	Male	Females	Total		Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE
Cabo Delgado	84	75	79		199.8	2.56	25.3	8.03	2.7	0.28	10.8	0.15	2.8	0.12
Gaza	87	92	89		177.5	2.04	29.6	14.38	3.6	0.33	10.8	0.18	3.0	0.13
Inhambane	84	89	87		176.0	1.79	19.0	7.01	3.5	0.33	10.9	0.16	2.7	0.09
Maputo Cidade	94	100	97		170.9	1.46	29.8	4.22	5.1	0.16	10.3	0.17	3.3	0.06
Manica	97	81	84		177.7	1.75	12.2	1.99	4.2	0.29	11.2	0.10	2.8	0.12
Maputo Province	103	108	105		172.3	2.45	29.3	6.80	5.4	0.30	10.8	0.17	3.2	0.11
Nampula	73	67	70		180.1	1.26	19.9	4.06	3.2	0.22	10.9	0.11	2.8	0.13
Niassa	94	88	91		183.1	2.80	22.8	4.58	3.7	0.24	11.0	0.16	2.9	0.13
Sofala	82	73	77		171.9	2.15	38.1	6.76	4.1	0.32	10.0	0.22	3.0	0.11
Tete	92	88	90		174.6	2.02	18.8	3.99	3.6	0.29	10.2	0.18	2.7	0.15
Zambézia	88	78	83		180.0	2.34	22.1	4.82	3.1	0.30	10.2	0.21	2.7	0.11
<b>Mozambique</b>	86	81	83		176.7	0.63	24.9	2.13	4.0	0.08	10.6	0.06	3.0	0.03

\* from Ministry of Education School Survey (2005), other data from Survey by Passos, (2005)

The data in Table 3 shows that the mean age for children in grade 6 was 176.7 months (14.7 years old), which is much older than is expected, recognizing that if all students had entered school at the official age of entry and there had been no grade repetition, then the expected age would be 132 months (11 years old). The high numbers of over-age students is principally due to high levels of grade repetition, although this has been reduced since the change in the policy in 2004 mentioned above, and also children enrolling late in first grade (Passos et al, 2005). Table 3 also shows a significant variability between boys' and girls' enrolment ratios at the national level and between regions in the country. As mentioned above, one of the reasons for this imbalance is the reduced number of upper primary schools compared to lower primary schools, resulting in children often needing to go to other areas to continue with their education. Parents are reluctant to send particularly girl children to travel to attend this next level of schooling or stay in hostels due to the increased risks associated with this, including the risk of sexual abuse.

**Table 4: Average Distance from household to Upper Primary School for Grade Six Student**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Mean Distance (km)</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>
Cabo Delgado	25.8	7.83
Gaza	9.5	4.21
Inhambane	8.3	3.77
Manica	12.6	3.70
Maputo Provincia	5.9	1.22
Nampula	27.5	7.16
Niassa	18.3	7.46
Sofala	11.1	3.63
Tete	23.4	9.42
Zambézia	19.5	7.52
<b>Mozambique</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>1.59</b>

Looking at the average distance that a Grade 6 student has to walk to attend school, which according to this survey was 13.2 kilometers, one can easily see why this is cited as a significant constraint to accessing upper primary schools, particularly for girls. The variation among the regions is also significant, with children in Maputo province traveling far less than children living in Nampula for example, where the distance is 27.5km.

The prevalence of violence, sexual abuse and harassment in schools (and while going to school) is also particularly detrimental to girls' attendance. As Kabeer (2004, p.40) wrote,

Studies from sub-Saharan Africa highlight the sexual harassment of girls as a key factor in explaining gender inequalities in educational attainment, with male teachers emerging as the main perpetrators. The studies point out that sexual harassment was treated, along with corporal punishment, verbal abuse and bullying as 'inevitable' aspects of school life, a manifestation of unequal gender relationships and of the authoritarian ethos of the educational hierarchy.

A qualitative study by Matavele (2006) on the sexual abuse of children found that abuse is prevalent in Mozambique in many different forms, including verbal and physical, and is carried out by teachers, community members on the way to school, and also fellow students. Although the awareness of this problem has increased in the recent past based on government statements on the issue and also a significant increase in the coverage of incidences in newspapers and other press, more research on the extent of various forms of physical and sexual abuse is required, and also urgent scaling-up of actions to address this barrier need to be implemented.

As mentioned above, the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic is threatening to undermine the positive trends in many of the social and economic indicators. The current high incidence of HIV/AIDS, currently at 16 percent of the reproductive age population, is a key challenge to all sectors and the development of the country in general. It is estimated that 1.6 million Mozambicans are living with HIV or AIDS (United Nations, 2006). HIV/AIDS is having a growing negative impact on children in Mozambique, with over 1 million children having been either directly or indirectly affected by the AIDS pandemic

since 2004. There is also an increasing gender gap in the epidemic, with women making-up an estimated 58 percent of those infected with HIV/AIDS. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS among females aged between 15 to 19 years is three times higher than among boys in the same age group and four times higher in the age group 20 to 24 (Ministry of Health, 2007). Further research is needed to better understand the specific reasons behind this increasing gender gap, but based on global evidence it can be assumed that the social factors related to gender relations, such as limited decision-making authority regarding sexual practices, are the principle underlying causes.

An important element of the HIV/AIDS epidemic which is relevant to the discussion on social exclusion in education is the extent which people affected by HIV/AIDS (either infected or with family members infected) are stigmatized within the community. A UNICEF supported survey conducted in 3 districts in 2007 (Arnaldo, 2007) asked questions related to the stigmatisation of people living with HIV. Table 5 indicates that there is a high level of stigma in Mozambique related to those affected by HIV/AIDS.

**Table 5:** Percentages of young people (15-24) who report an accepting or supportive attitude on all four component standard questions (Arnaldo, 2007)

	<b>Willing to take care of an HIV+ family member in own house</b>	<b>Would buy vegetables from an HIV+ vegetable vendor</b>	<b>Believes an HIV+ teacher can continue teaching</b>	<b>Believes information on HIV+ relative should not be kept secret</b>
<b>Average in all districts</b>	90.9	40.8	53.4	17.7

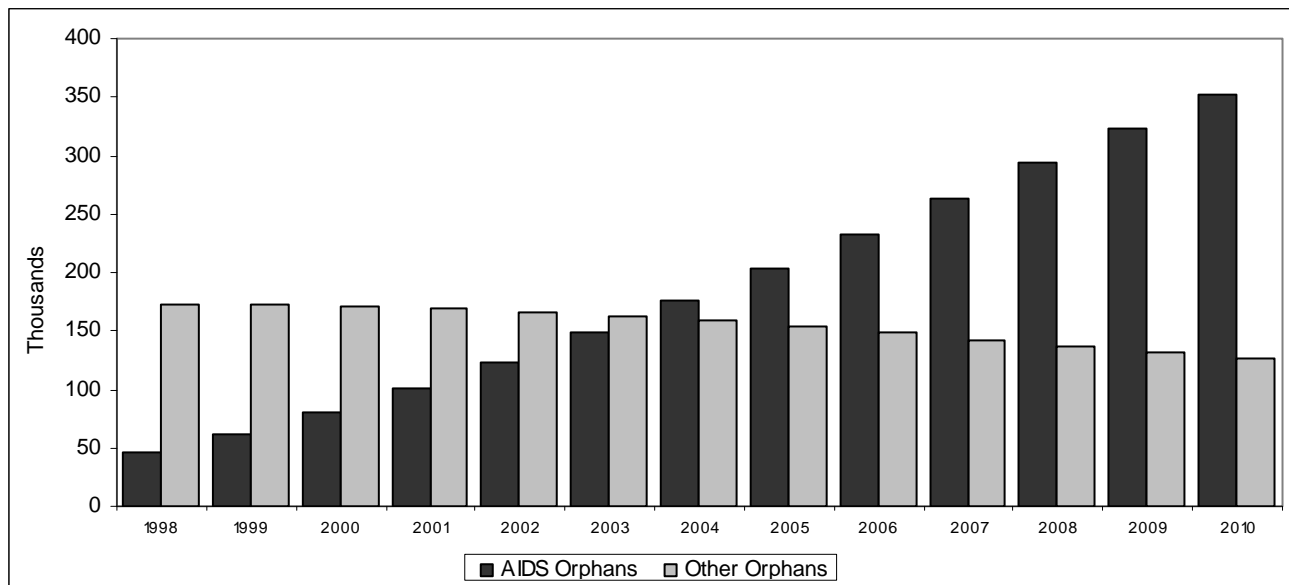
From the table above, one can see that 59% of the respondents would not buy vegetables from an HIV positive vegetable vendor, which provides an indication of stigma that exists in Mozambique and the possible barriers that this may present to children affected by HIV in accessing education.



The growing orphan population is also largely a result of this epidemic, which also has important implications on the social exclusion of children from school in the country. While the figures differ between various sources, the proportion of children who are orphaned (defined in Mozambique as having lost one or both parents) ranges from 12 to 16 per cent of total population (United Nations, 2007). It is estimated that in 2007, 410,000 children had lost one or both parents due to AIDS which is twice the number in 2003. This is estimated to rise to almost 630,000 by the year 2010 (INE et al, 2004). The Ministry of Health estimates that since 2004, the number of children who have lost both parents to AIDS outnumber those having lost parents by other causes (Figure 2). The proportion of orphans is slightly higher in urban areas (13.8 per cent) than in rural areas (11.1 per cent), and correlates with HIV prevalence by province. For example, in Sofala province, where HIV prevalence is the highest in the country (26 per cent in 2004), almost one in five children is an orphan (MISAU, 2007). With the above mentioned social stigma, this significant population of children is facing additional barriers to enrolling and attending school. I earlier mentioned the often overlapping factors which results in the social exclusion of children from school. Most orphans in Mozambique suffer from a multitude of challenges, including for example being stigmatized due to HIV/AIDS; being poor; living in households with many other children; and other factors.

UNICEF ranked Mozambique's orphaned population in 2003 as the 11th most severe in the world in absolute terms (UNICEF, 2005). With the increase in recent years, Mozambique's orphaned population is among the largest in the world.

**Figure 2 Number of Orphans (lost both parents) aged 0 to 17, 1998–2010 (INE, 2004 and MISAU, 2007)**



*Source:* Authors' calculations based on data from MISAU 2007.

Based on analysis at the global level of countries with a high level of HIV prevalence and resulting orphan population, in the absence of parents who are considered the primary guardians of a child's education, it is found that orphans are significantly disadvantaged in terms of their education states. High drop out rates, grade repetition and late enrolment are a result of the impact of HIV/AIDS on the education attainment of orphans due to various reasons including a lack of financial resources for education, working instead of studying, and a high level of psychological stress and trauma (UNICEF, 2007). There is not a sufficient level of disaggregated data in Mozambique related to orphans to make similar conclusions – which is an area for further research. This provides an important example of the importance of education monitoring systems that is capable of generating disaggregated information to enable policy-making and also designing and assessing the effectiveness of programmatic interventions.

Recognizing the high levels of poverty within Mozambique, discrimination in resource allocation within households can have a devastating affect on those who receive less than

others. This has particular relevance for orphans, as one study has pointed to “discrimination within poor households in the intra-household allocation of resources against children who are not direct biological descendants of the household head” (United Nations, 2007, p.47). There are also other forms of discriminatory practices against orphans and vulnerable children, particularly those who are orphaned as a result of HIV/AIDS, at the community and household level, which will be further discussed in this chapter.

Orphans and vulnerable children are disadvantaged in terms of access to schooling due to a variety of factors, including higher levels of poverty and therefore limited resources, but also due to discriminatory practices within schools. As mentioned earlier, it is very difficult and at times not possible to separate the various interrelated factors which result in exclusion. In the case of orphans in Mozambique, orphaned children are more likely to live in households where the head of the household has had no education (United Nations, 2006). Orphaned children also tend to live in households headed by women, which again are disadvantaged across many indicators. While female-headed households make up only 30 per cent of all households, over half of orphans (54 per cent) live in households headed by women (INE, 2005). This not only indicates that there are multiple factors which may then lead to the poorer education status of orphans, but also that poor households “are disproportionately taking the responsibility of coping with the orphan crisis” (United Nations, 2006).

Data related to the intra-household distribution of resources and specifically how this affects orphans is limited. Similarly, while there is very little qualitative information on the extent orphans are treated differently at school, there are indications that discriminatory practices take place that result in the social exclusion of this vulnerable group of children from school. Recognizing their limited resources and also low levels of social capital, orphans and vulnerable children rely disproportionately on negative coping strategies, such as early marriage or commercial sexual exploitation (United Nations 2006). This is also a result of - in many cases - the stigma of HIV/AIDS that further restricts the choices of HIV infected or affected children. Maternal orphans were also

found to be over twice as likely to be severely stunted in drought affected areas compared to the general child population (United Nations, 2006). All the factors summarized above have resulted in the disadvantaged status of orphans in education. In 2005, only 46 per cent of maternal orphans aged 6-12 years were found to attend primary school compared with 71 per cent among non-orphaned children in the same age range (United Nations, 2006). As I will discuss later in this thesis, participatory action research would enable a better understanding of the constraints and barriers that an orphan faces to enrolling and regularly attending school.

A baseline survey undertaken in three districts in Mozambique in 2007 with the support of UNICEF found that children who have lost both parents (which in Mozambique are referred to as ‘double orphans’) are only 80% as likely to be attending school as children with one or both parents (Arnaldo, 2007). According to the Demographic and Health Survey (2003), Table 6 indicates the ratio of school attendance between orphans and ‘nonorphans’ (children who still have both parents).

**Table 6. Ratio of Current School Attendance of Orphans versus Nonorphans, by Type of Orphan, 2003 (percent)**

<i>Type of orphan</i>	<i>2003</i>
Maternal	0.81
Paternal	0.97
Both parents died	0.80

Source: based on DHS data

The above table indicates that children who have lost both parents are only 80% as likely to attend school as with both parents still living, which is consistent with the UNICEF supported survey of 2007 (Arnaldo, 2007). The table also shows that the impact of a mother dying is greater than if the father dies, with the latter not having a significant impact on the chances of a child attending school. Evans (2007, p.52), based on an analysis of the impact of losing a parent on the education status of children in Africa, concluded that there was a “substantial and highly statistically significant negative impact of parent death on primary school participation.” The analysis also found that the impact

was more than twice as severe for maternal deaths than for paternal deaths. “Whether HIV/AIDS-related or not, adult morbidity and mortality reduces children’s school enrolment and achievement” (Evans, 2007, p.47). As mentioned above, while the quantitative information above sheds light on certain characteristics of children that are excluded from primary education, the qualitative information from participatory case studies and action research complements this information by providing insights into the reasons for why children are excluded.

A study based on longitudinal data in South Africa during the early 2000s also concluded that a maternal death reduces not only the child’s probability of being enrolled in school but also the average years of schooling and the average money spent on education (Case and Adrington, 2005). There were “significant differences in the impact of mothers’ and fathers’ deaths. The loss of a child’s mother is a strong predictor of poor schooling outcome” (Case and Adrington, 2005, p.2). Regarding the level of discrimination within households, this study also found that “children whose mothers have died appear to be at an educational disadvantage when compared to non-orphaned children with whom they live” (Case and Adrington, 2005, p.2). The study also found that the impact of the loss of the father was seen on the overall income status of the household, which also negatively affected the chances of children continuing to attend school, rather than as a result of a change in intra-household distribution of decision-making.

While a similar investigation has not taken place in Mozambique, the conclusions of these studies from neighboring countries show that a decline in enrolment depends on the sex of the deceased parent and the sex of the child who lost a parent, with the negative effects being greatest for a maternal death and a female child (Case and Adrington, 2005, Unterhalter et al, 2006). Initial indications show that this finding also holds for Mozambique, where both the sex of the deceased parent and the sex of the child affect the likelihood of a child being enrolled (Arnaldo, 2007). The possibility of supporting targeted interventions to reach these children and mitigate the impact of the loss of a parent is an area for further research – based on an understanding that there are key social dynamics which result in these children being socially excluded from school. In terms of

scale of the problem, it should be noted that the increasing number of orphans in Mozambique has the potential of reversing the positive trend related to the gender gap in both enrolment and completion rates.

### **Policy and Programmatic Responses in Mozambique**

The Mozambican Constitution recognizes education as a right as well as a duty of all its citizens. Within the context of its overall development strategy, the government adopted in 1995 the National Education Policy, which established the policy framework for the National Education System. The National Education Policy as well as the Strategic Education Plan (SEP 1), reaffirms education as a fundamental human right and also recognizes that it is a key strategy to improve living standards and the reduce absolute poverty. This strategy is a reflection of the government's commitment to education with a view to reaching the Millennium Development Goals supported by the international community.

The National Education Policy identified the government's main goals with regard to the education system as a whole, and defines specific policies for every sub-sector within the system. The Ministry of Education and Culture has been working under the Strategic Plan for Education and Culture (SPEC) for the period 2006 – 2010/11, which places quality and equity in basic education at the centre of the education policy, along with particular emphasis on organizational and administrative capacity development and increasing emphasis on post-primary education. In terms of targets, the Strategic Plan aims to ensure that all boys and girls are covered by the primary school system by the year 2015 and aims to eliminate gender inequalities at primary and high school level education. It is the Ministry of Education and Culture's explicit objective to ensure that all Mozambican children complete seven years of primary school. While acknowledging that the various educational needs have remained unfulfilled in the country, the government nevertheless also recognises that the scarcity of financial and human resources necessitates that key challenges need to be prioritised. The National Education Policy identifies basic

education (Grades 1 to 7) and adult literacy as “the top most priority of the government” (Passos, 2005, p.7).

One of the key objectives of the Strategic Plan for Education is the universalisation of access to primary education for all Mozambican children. “Additional objectives include improvements in the quality of basic education and the establishment of a sustainable, flexible, and decentralised system in which responsibility would be widely shared with those who work at lower levels of the system and those whom it serves” (Passos, 2005, p.7). These are obviously very ambitious objectives in the limited resource environment of Mozambique, but provide an overall vision of education and also reiterate the obligations of the Government and its partners.

One of the salient developments in Mozambique related to primary education was the abolition of school fees in 2005. This act has been repeatedly cited as one of the key reasons for a significant increase in the enrolment rate since that time (Sanchez 2007, p.2). “Parents expressed that the decision to abolish the matriculation fee and other education reforms such as the new curriculum and free textbooks had a positive impact on the decision of more parents to send their children to school.” Another factor which has had a positive impact has been the provision of small incentives, such as basic learning materials. There are a variety of initiatives in Mozambique that provide modest levels of support to children to serve as an incentive to remain in school, including as part of a comprehensive programme entitled “child-friendly schools” which is implemented in seven districts with support from UNICEF. A large scale programme supported by the World Bank, called the Direct Support to Schools (ADE) programme, also provides some free basic school materials and there are indications that this has also motivated more parents to send their children to primary school (Sanchez, 2007).

In addition to providing support for learning supplies, the Direct Support to Schools programme also enables schools to purchase equipment and to support other initiatives to strengthen learning and the implementation of the new curriculum. The overall objective of the programme is to strengthen the capability of schools to enhance the access and

quality of the learning process (Equipa, 2007). As mentioned earlier, schools require a certain capacity in order to provide an inclusive education. Providing resources directly to the school, and allowing for flexibility on their utilization to enable them to address local constraints, has the potential to have a significant positive impact.

Regarding the quality of the school, an important reform initiative related to the curriculum was undertaken beginning in 2003, and resulted in the introduction of the new basic education curriculum in 2004. Similar to the discussion in the county analysis of India, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to undertake a comprehensive review of the curriculum of the country. However, the objective of revising the curriculum was to make it more appropriate to the learning requirements of children in Mozambique. The use of home languages in the first grades of school was also introduced at this time, with a transition to the official national language at a later stage. However, the actual practice of this has been varied, with many teachers continuing to only use Portuguese as the means of instruction (Passos, 2005). A key reason for this is that the absence of any learning materials in local languages.

The repetition rate is very high in Mozambique, with nearly 78.2 percent of pupils having repeated a grade (Passos, 2005). One of the reasons for the high repetition rate has been due to a perception among teachers that if a high percentage of pupils fail in their class, then parents will recognize that they are providing a high standard. The curriculum introduced in 2003 envisions that children are automatically promoted and therefore eliminating cases of repetition. “In the new curriculum, there is strong advocacy for formative evaluation and the concept of automatic promotion” (Passos 2005, p.1).

In 2000, the Ministry of Education initiated a process of decentralising the development of a certain proportion of the curriculum, and also monitoring its implementation. The system allows for 20 percent of the national curriculum for basic education to be considered the ‘local curriculum’, with this portion of the curriculum being delegated to the local level to be developed. It was expected that this ‘local curriculum’ would provide for the specific learning needs of the learners in the local context. However, initial



indications are that this is underutilized and often translates into unstructured time (Sanchez, 2007).

The perception of parents and other respondents is that the quality of the school changed positively since 2004 due to the introduction of the new curriculum and the development and free distribution of new textbooks (Sanchez, 2007). However, with the significant increase in enrolment, and without the corresponding increase in number of teachers to respond to this increase, there has been an increase in the pupil-teacher ratio, as mentioned above, that has negatively affected the quality of the education experience for some children (Sanchez, 2007).

One strategy adopted by the Government to try and reduce the high levels of drop out at the point when students transition from EP1 to EP2 (Grade 5 to grade 6), especially amongst girls, has been to expand the lower primary schools to include grade 6 and 7, thereby eliminating the need for children to switch schools when transitioning from grade 5 to 6. It is expected that this policy will contribute significantly to the reduction of the gender imbalance in the transition from grade 5 to 6 because girls will have access to upper primary education closer to their homes. As mentioned above, the increased risk of girls to violence, particularly when they need to travel considerable distance to school, is one key factor that excludes them from school. There have also been some modest initiatives of providing support in the form of scholarships as an incentive to continue to enroll in EP2, which will also contribute to reducing the drop-outs at this level. However, as argued at the beginning of this thesis, these initiatives need to be monitored in order to assess their effectiveness in reducing social exclusion of children in various contexts.

Recognizing the relatively limited development status of Mozambique, one of the fundamental challenges facing Mozambique's education system is to adequately fund the expansion in the access of schooling and also support improving quality. As mentioned above, the Government repeatedly committed to expanding education opportunities and also improving quality. However, although a significant proportion of the budget, the

overall resource envelop remains low and the amount of funds allocated to education is not sufficient to meet the demand and also enhance the quality.

Education has been the single largest category of recurrent investment expenditure, after road construction and maintenance. Considering that increasing the salaries of civil servants, including teachers, is one of the Government's short-term priorities, the share of public resources devoted to education is set to increase significantly because the majority of public sector workers are teachers (Passos 2005, p.6).

Recognizing the aid dependency in Mozambique, a lot of the additional resources that are required to expand the education system will need to come from external partners including International Financial Institutions and bilateral donors.

One of the key indicators to assess the government's commitment to realizing its obligation to addressing social exclusion in primary education is to assess the extent to which the allocation of public resources is prioritized towards addressing challenges which are faced by the most disadvantaged or excluded populations. While the data on expenditures in Mozambique does not permit disaggregation to enable incidence analysis by social characteristics, it is possible to ascertain the geographic distribution of the resources. The education sector's expenditure in 2007 was 10,765 million MT – corresponding to about 22% of the state's total expenditure – of which about 16% is externally funded through the sector common fund. Table 7 demonstrates clearly that on a 'per school student' basis, education spending too is exceptionally unequal across provinces, with the most populous provinces (Zambezia, Inhambane, Nampula and Cabo Delgado), which are also the most disadvantaged, consistently being under-funded compared to other, better-off provinces in Mozambique (McCoy, 2008). This under-prioritisation of the most disadvantaged provinces is a result of relatively limited transparency in the budgeting process which makes it difficult to disaggregate the budget by province, which constraints the political pressure and advocacy from these provinces. Furthermore, the limited absorption capacity in disadvantaged provinces, and competing public sector priorities such as the need to improve infrastructure such as roads and also continue to expand coverage of electricity, has resulted in more public resources directed to the Southern part of the country. Relatively expensive services, such as providing

tertiary education facilities, are also almost exclusively concentrated in the capital, Maputo, or in provincial capitals which has contributed to this imbalance in public expenditure between province and also within provinces.

**Table 7: USD Per School Student Recurrent Education Spending by Province, 2003-06 (McCoy, 2008)**

	Allocation					Execution				
	2003	2004	2005	2006	Ave.	2003	2004	2005	2006	Ave.
Niassa	41.5	53.0	56.5	61.0	53.0	39.8	52.4	54.5	60.6	51.8
Cabo Delgado	30.8	43.5	49.7	49.0	43.2	28.2	42.0	49.5	48.9	42.1
Nampula	33.7	42.4	48.8	43.8	42.1	31.4	40.9	48.0	43.6	41.0
Zambezi	26.4	25.9	34.6	37.6	31.1	24.4	24.8	33.3	36.7	29.8
Tete	41.7	58.2	50.8	61.0	53.0	40.2	57.8	49.9	59.2	51.8
Manica	39.5	51.0	55.4	59.2	51.3	38.2	49.3	53.8	58.8	50.0
Sofala	42.6	53.0	55.0	61.0	53.0	42.1	52.7	53.7	60.9	52.4
Inhambane	31.6	42.2	46.8	47.7	42.1	31.4	42.2	46.5	47.3	41.9
Gaza	33.2	42.3	46.0	46.8	42.1	32.4	41.6	45.4	46.8	41.5
Maputo Province	55.2	62.9	70.6	71.0	64.9	50.0	60.3	70.1	70.6	62.7
Maputo City	56.1	74.9	80.0	80.0	72.8	56.1	72.7	77.7	79.9	71.6
Central Organs	2.5	2.7	3.3	3.2	3.0	2.1	2.6	3.3	3.3	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>37.2</b>	<b>46.3</b>	<b>52.1</b>	<b>52.8</b>	<b>46.9</b>	<b>35.5</b>	<b>45.2</b>	<b>50.1</b>	<b>52.3</b>	<b>45.8</b>

The data in Table 7, when combined with Table 3, indicates that there isn't a correlation between education needs and budgetary allocations. Of particular note are the provinces of Nampula and Zambezia, which accommodate an average of 19% and 15% of students respectively, and are significantly disadvantaged according to all education indicators,

but consistently receive under 10% of total sector financing (McCoy, 2008). This indicates that the Government is not fulfilling its obligations to the extent possible even with the limited resources available.

A large-scale programme was undertaken in Mozambique from 2002-2006 with the support of UNICEF to strengthen school planning and management involving school principals, teachers and members of the school councils. The programme was designed to strengthen the capacity of school management processes and focused on issues related to gender equality, special care of particularly vulnerable children and improving the quality of basic school. The programme also supplied school supplies and teaching/learning materials to schools, teachers and pupils.

The evaluation of this programme included a survey of teachers on the impact of the various interventions on addressing some of the key constraints to access and quality of education. The majority of teachers (76.9%) who benefited from the teacher training felt that the training and the introduction of the local curriculum created the conditions to attract pupils to the schools as it enabled a more effective response to disadvantage children but also resulted in better teacher/pupil relations and better school/community interaction (Equipa, 2007). The majority of teachers who benefited from this programme also felt that the increase of the access of girls in their schools was due to the interventions supported by the programme, including greater sensitivity to gender; better interaction between parents and girls; the sensitization of pregnant girls to come back to school and also the prevention of premature marriages. The training was seen by teachers as having brought about results mainly in the sensitization of the community, which is carried out by teachers in school meetings, with the aim of keeping their children in school, and also the distribution of school materials.

### **General Observations**

Recognising the high levels of poverty in Mozambique and the specific vulnerability of girls, and orphans in particular, to accessing primary education, a multi-sector and multi-

facted approach to addressing the social exclusion of children needs to be undertaken in the country in order to effectively address all factors which inhibit certain children from achieving a positive educational outcome. This would include interventions directed at ensuring schools are inclusive, and also effectively linking the school with the community and with households. This would enable greater coordination and mutually reinforcing processes to overcome the specific barriers to access of each child, but also to overcome influences within the household and within communities which may be resulting in some children being excluded from school. This however would need to be based on an analysis of disaggregated quantitative data which provides information on which children are being excluded (i.e., disaggregated by certain characteristics) and where (i.e., disaggregated by geographic area). Qualitative information through participatory action research would complement this information enabling further insight into the local dynamics which are resulting in children being excluded. Engaging the involved stakeholders in the assessment and analysis process would also contribute to the identification of strategies to overcome the barriers.

Interventions that have proven effective include those which address both the supply side and demand side constraints, and also are tailored to address the specific constraints of each household. In Mozambique, there is a need to continue to accelerate the construction of schools and increase the numbers of teachers, prioritising the areas in the country that continue to be disadvantaged. Mobilising school management committees and increasing their capacity and sensitivity to the challenges faced by socially excluded children, including girls, orphans and other children, and supporting them to facilitate a local level process which identifies and address these constraints has also proven effective (Arnaldo, 2007). Regarding constraints in the demand for education, in addition to large-scale mobilisation and sensitisation campaigns during enrolment drives, providing particular incentives, such as learning materials and a school bag as described above, to disadvantaged children has proven to promote attendance in Mozambique. Developing the criteria to target children who would benefit from this incentive is challenging in a country with continued high poverty rates such as Mozambique.

The large-scale programme of providing direct assistance to schools in Mozambique has the potential of supplementing the capacity of schools to become more inclusive. With the profound impact of losing one's parents, particularly when girls lose their mothers, there is also a need to provide direct support to these children in order to counteract the serious negative consequences of this event. In order to understand the implications of the death of a parent on children in terms of their ability to continue to attend and learn in school, participatory research should be undertaken. A case study approach, which provided a comprehensive perspective on the challenges a child faces when they become an orphan – sampled from diverse contexts – would provide very useful insights and contribute to an improved understanding, which would enable more effective policy and programmatic responses.

Although various forms of support can be provided, including direct cash support to disadvantaged children, the programme supported by UNICEF provides learning materials and school bag to these children, and also a basic 'household kit' which includes items such as cooking utensils and blankets, as a form of direct support to socially excluded children as an incentive to encourage them to attend school. In addition to providing direct support to children, the programme also supports local level organisations to support orphans and vulnerable children to accessing services, including education. This support can take the form of facilitating their enrolment in school (by talking to the teachers and assisting with documentation); providing support to transportation to the school (through a community member); and/or resolving other issues that have been identified by the children themselves. Providing specific support to overcome the particular challenges faced by socially excluded children has proven effective as a complementary measure to broad-based support that is intended to enhance access and quality of schooling.

This initiative has been cited by an evaluation of the UNICEF supported programme as one of the effective means of reaching these disadvantaged children and promoting their access to schools. Regarding the provision of school materials in particular, the evaluation of the UNICEF supported programme concluded that the materials provided

“improved teaching, learning and pupil participation in class” (Equipa, 2007, p.37). When the school council members were interviewed, they also recognized that providing materials to children also helped to positively influence the decision-making process within households regarding sending children to school. Equipa (2007, p.37) wrote that “when the benefited children arrive in the community and show the material to them, they tell their parents that they also want to study.” Recognizing that the cost of education remains a barrier to access, this form of support will benefit all children, but particularly the poorest children who continue to be excluded from school due to the cost as illustrated above.

The students surveyed as part of the evaluation of the education programme reported that, in order to address the problem of high drop-outs, the government should “fight pregnancy and premature marriages, sensitization of parents and students as to the importance of an education, and to combat violence in schools. All the pupils surveyed reported and reiterated that the provision of school materials help a great deal to keep children in school longer” (Equipa, 2007, p.50). Participatory research that enables children to contribute their insights and understanding of why children are excluded from school and what can be done to promote attendance, complements the quantitative information available from surveys and facilitates the necessary analysis and monitoring related to the effectiveness of programme interventions designed to promote accessibility of primary school. This is consistent with the above mentioned analysis of the factors which cause social exclusion, which also recognises that the multitude of factors need to be addressed in order to overcome social exclusion of children from school.

Further research is needed on the causes of female under-representation in education, especially from upper primary school upwards, and to explore the potential corrective measures that will result in girls accessing and participating in education. Additional comprehensive surveys that are of sufficient scale to provide reliable, disaggregated information on children’s education status by various characteristics would provide useful insights into which children remain excluded and the corresponding dynamics which are causing this exclusion. These data could also be used to identify subnational

areas that have persistently high excluded populations, and therefore require enhanced, tailored support. Based on the quantitative analysis of the data cited above, and also the complementary qualitative information, children that are infected or affected by HIV/AIDs continue to be a particularly excluded group. Further work is also needed in Mozambique to identify those pupils whose attendance is erratic, with particular emphasis on orphans recognizing their disadvantaged status. This could be part of a broader study into the impact of HIV/AIDS on children's education (Passos, 2005). As mentioned above, participatory action research that involved all relevant stakeholders, including children themselves, in the analysis of the barriers to accessing and benefiting from primary school, and also exploring strategies to overcome the barriers some children face and therefore promoting universal access, would be an important input to the success of policy and programmes which have this objective. Complementing the information from – or incorporating into – routine monitoring systems of the education system with participatory processes would enhance accountability of duty-bearers to realize their respective obligations.

Realizing every child's right to education in Mozambique is particularly challenging because of the scarcity of both financial and human resources in the country. As mentioned previously, a certain level of capacity is needed to overcome the social biases of a society and thereby, address social exclusion of children from primary school. Unlike in India, in which financial and human resources are not the key constraint, in Mozambique, the Government's limited capacity at all levels remains a significant challenge to realizing the rights of all children to education.

As shown above, a multi-sectoral approach is required which targets not only the comprehensive needs in the school, but also supports household and communities to overcome barriers for certain children. In addition to the enhancing the quality of the education being provided, other interventions including in the areas of health, water and sanitation, and also special initiatives for particularly vulnerable children including orphans are needed. One challenge to implementing a comprehensive approach to improving the school is the need for effective coordination amongst various ministries,



including the Ministry of Education related to all education interventions; Ministry of Health in promotion of health activities in schools including HIV/AIDS prevention; Ministry of Public Works, which is responsible for water and sanitation facilities; and Ministry of Women and Social Action, which is responsible for providing targeting assistance to particularly vulnerable children. Recognizing the limited capacity of the government in Mozambique, particularly at subnational level, ensuring effective coordination between the various ministries is a significant challenge. One way to facilitate this coordination would be through further enhancing decentralization and empowering districts administration to ensure this coordination. Furthermore, promoting community involvement in the management of the school would also facilitate ‘bottom-up accountability’ and promote effective coordination. Ensuring a monitoring system which effectively provides information on the current status of access to school, but also monitoring of the progress with various activities related to improving the school by the various ministries would be another important component of ensuring ministries realize their obligations.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), both international and national, continue to play a significant role in increasing the quality of education in Mozambique. This is a result of the limited capacity of the Government to provide a quality, inclusive education service but is also based on the overall high levels of poverty and aid dependency of the country resulting in NGOs being funded directly from donors. While the positive results of these initiatives are welcomed and in line with government policy, the sustainability of this approach is a matter of concern. There is also an issue of consistency, as many different organisations apply varied approaches to enhancing accessibility of primary education or improving the quality, including for example in the content and the methodology of training teachers. While this is often done in collaboration with district level officials, the role of the provincial and national government is often limited and therefore, a common and consistent approach is not followed throughout the primary education sector. NGOs often support programmes in limited geographic locations with the stated objective that it is a pilot which, upon completion, would be scaled-up within the government system.

However, the record of small-scale pilots in Mozambique being scaled-up to a provincial or nationwide level which positively affects all schools has been limited, partly due to the lack of involvement of senior government officials in designing and managing the pilot, but also because of the limited resource envelope of the government making it very difficult to absorb additional costs often associated with scaling-up a pilot intervention. Although I have argued extensively that participatory research is necessary in order to understand and adequately address social exclusion, the challenge of the scale of this approach should also be recognized and will be further discussed in the next chapter. The other very important aspect of such a significant role for non-government organisations is the possible dilution of the accountability of the government as a duty-bearer to providing an inclusive, quality primary education system. As described at length in the introductory chapter of this thesis, the human-rights based approach to addressing social exclusion in primary education emphasizes the importance of understanding and promoting the role of each duty-bearer, and ensuring a monitoring system is in place which provides information about the extent each duty-bearer realizes their respective obligation. With such a significant role being played by non-governmental organisations, the government's own accountability may be diminished, either by its own perception, or that of the donors or also of the community themselves if they interpret the work of the NGOs not as supporting the government to meet its obligations but rather substituting for it.

## Chapter 6: Policy and Programmatic Implications

Explanations to date of educational disadvantage in India and Mozambique have predominantly focused on the supply dimensions of the problem which is more commonly understood and can be largely solved by providing additional resources (Ramachandran, 2004). A broader approach however is needed based on the conceptual framework of social exclusion offered in this thesis. It has been shown that the interplay between life situations, school functioning, classroom processes, parental aspirations, community related processes and other related factors all have an influence on the educational outcomes of disadvantaged groups (Jha and Jhingran 2005). A deeper, broader and context specific understanding is necessary in order to formulate a sufficiently comprehensive policy and programmatic response to address social exclusion of children from primary school. As Seel (2007, p.7) wrote,

‘equity in access’ and ‘equity in quality’ are complex, requiring attention to specific life situations in which girls and boys find themselves, to ‘demand’ as well as ‘supply’ factors, to attitudinal as well as economic barriers, to school-community relationships and to the ethos, teaching approaches and management of each school.

As was shown in the two country analyses, there are various demand ‘factors’ that constrain children’s attendance, such as perception of poor quality of education; discriminatory practices within a household or within the community which discourage certain children from attending school; or as was cited in the country analysis of Mozambique, high levels of poverty. Supply factors would include, for example, the availability of the school and teachers including its location; quality of the infrastructure; and other factors that influence the quality and accessibility of the education service.

The information and analysis which forms the basis of national policies and programmes “needs to contain as rigorous an analysis as possible on the full range of educational disparities and the dynamics of educational disadvantage and exclusion, using qualitative and quantitative sources, with particular efforts to identify ‘hidden’ and ‘hard to reach’ children and to ‘cross-disaggregate’ to understand how different factors impact upon each other” (Seel, 2007, p.xix). The governments of India and Mozambique, as described in

the country analyses, both have clear policy objectives related to ensuring all children have access to school, and the right to education for children is included in their national Constitutions. The extent to which each government is ensuring this right is realized for all children was reviewed extensively in the country analyses. It was shown that both countries continue to have children which are socially excluded from school, although the causes and forms of this exclusion and also the policy and programmatic response differ extensively.

Evidence at the global level provides some guidance on the common policies which countries have implemented to produce positive, aggregate results in primary education. Bruns (2003) showed that countries which have attained a Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of over 85% and primary completion rate of over 70% are likely to have implemented the following measures in education: high percentage of GDP allocated to public primary education; unit costs in the middle of the range; teachers are paid an average of 3.3% of per capita GDP; slightly higher spending on non-teacher salary inputs than teacher salaries; average teacher : pupil ratio of 1:39; average repetition rates below 10%. In terms of policy developments, a key policy measure which is fundamental to addressing social exclusion is to put in place a policy objective of universal and compulsory free primary education, implemented and enforced by law (Tomasevski, 2006). This is the case in both India and Mozambique. As outlined in the country analyses, ensuring universal access necessitates the government to provide sufficient facilities, and ensure the deployment and presence of teachers and other key programmatic inputs. However, the policy statement itself as an aspiration provides a clear message to all duty-bearers about the importance of meeting their respective obligations. It is also evident that, particularly in developing countries, the impact of government policy and implementation capacity is important, particularly for determining the provision of facilities and equity of access (Boissiere, 2004).

In considering the impact on social exclusion, the country analyses confirmed that it is helpful to distinguish between three levels: general policies which improve access or quality of education for all children (i.e., training of teachers); policies that benefit all

children but proportionally benefit poor or disadvantaged children more (i.e., school feeding or universal distribution of learning materials); and policies that are focused on particular groups of children that face specific challenges in accessing school (i.e., SC children in India or orphaned children in Mozambique as outlined in the country analyses).

The country analyses in this thesis confirmed that, in terms of general policies to enhance access or improve quality, both India and Mozambique continue to build additional schools (or rehabilitate existing structures) and also hire more teachers (and provide additional in-service training). However, the quality of the schools in many areas in both India and Mozambique continues to constrain regular attendance of children and limits learning achievements – including for example the absence of sufficient water and sanitation facilities affecting the attendance of girls in particular. The expansion of the primary education system, as mentioned in the country analyses, has resulted in near universal primary school enrolment. However, while almost all children enrol, certain children continue to be socially excluded for the reasons discussed in the above country analyses. While continued large-scale initiatives that enhance the quality of the education system and also improve access should continue, addressing the key issues that have been shown to exclude children should be prioritised. For example, the geographic areas that are particular disadvantaged should be prioritised for additional schools and teachers and the location of the school should be placed in a location that facilitates access of disadvantaged children. The training of teachers should focus on enhancing skills of engaging disadvantaged children and promoting an inclusive environment within the classroom. Ensuring a basic level of infrastructure, including water and sanitation facilities, should also be prioritised based on a recognition that disadvantaged children are particularly affected by lack of access to these services within schools. A key challenge related to the national policy environment and the implementation of programmes is to ensure an adequate monitoring system that provides sufficient level of information on the effectiveness of the policies in reaching the most disadvantaged, disaggregated by key characteristics of children that are traditionally excluded, and also disaggregated geographically to the extent possible.

In addition to ‘mainstreaming’ issues that excluded children from school within the broad-based policies and programmes intended to improve the system as a whole, additional initiatives have been supported in both countries that are intended to benefit all children, but due to the nature of the assistance, positively benefit disadvantaged children. Initiatives such as school feeding in India have been initiated in all primary schools and benefit disadvantaged children in particular. For example, it was shown to be an important incentive for poor children in India who do not have another reliable source of food. Similarly in Mozambique, a minimum level of learning materials is provided to every child, which is an incentive to all children – but particularly for poor children who otherwise would not have access to these materials. The qualitative information presented in the country analysis of Mozambique confirmed the effectiveness of modest level of support as an incentive for disadvantaged children.

Regarding the third level of policies and programmes – those that target excluded children specifically – evidence was presented in the country analyses that examples of these initiatives in India (i.e., incentives for children from Scheduled Caste) and Mozambique (i.e., support provided to orphans and other vulnerable children) indicates that these initiatives have acted as incentives for children to attend school – thereby having a positive influence on attendance rates. However, as clearly illustrated by the data from the country analyses, children continue to be excluded from primary school in both countries. Furthermore, it should also be noted that there is a risk that providing incentives to certain children risks further stigmatising these children, may create resentment amongst the community, particularly in areas with high levels of poverty such as in Mozambique, or may result in the establishment of a sub-standard parallel system for excluded children. As discussed in the country analysis of India, the establishment of separate schools for children from Scheduled Castes can result in the provision of a sub-standard system for these children. It also negates the important positive social benefit of an inclusive system that, as shown in the India country analysis, can challenge exclusionary cultural practices that exist within a given community. As Kabeer (2004,

p.14) wrote, “universalist approaches are essential to building a sense of social solidarity and citizenship.”

As discussed above, while targeted programmes that address specific barriers that result in children being excluded from school may be necessary in some instances, the design and the implementation of the programmes needs to ensure that, in addition to providing support to excluded children, the initiatives also further challenge the more fundamental societal norms that exclude children. Kabeer (2006, p.16) concluded that such approaches “need to go beyond ‘ameliorative’ approaches that address the symptoms of the problem to ‘transformative’ approaches that address its causes.” It should also be noted, as seen in the two country analyses, that categorising policies and programmes as mentioned above is helpful in order to simplify the multitude of programmes and approaches and facilitate comparisons, but it risks oversimplification. For example, policies and programmes that focus on improving the quality of education can focus on the quality related issues that are particularly related to disadvantaged groups (such as gender training of teachers) or focus on more general quality issues, such as poor teaching practices, that will not address causes of social exclusion specifically.

It was shown in the India country analysis that programmes that are related to disadvantaged groups may actually exclude certain groups within this category if not done sensitively and with adequate monitoring systems – such as the provision of mid-day meals that results in the social exclusion of children from Scheduled Castes. “Given the inherent exclusionary potential of educational institutions and processes, a policy approach that seeks to be inclusive needs to be mindful of all the ways in which education excludes and ask if the proposed reform is structural enough to ensure inclusion” (Subrahmanian, 2003, p.7). The human rights based approach highlights the importance of the process as well as the expected result of programmes. This also in turn has implications for the inclusion of relevant indicators in an education monitoring system, which will be further discussed in the conclusion of this thesis. As mentioned above, developing indicators and a corresponding monitoring system that is sensitive to the dynamics related to social exclusion, and also is able to measure the relevant

processes and results of implementation of programmes that are designed to positively influence these dynamics, is an area requiring greater focus and research.

Parallels can be drawn to the debate about the benefits of trickle down theory related to economic growth. In the 1980s, there were many influential development economists, particularly within the International Financial Institutions, that advocated for almost an exclusive focus on accelerating economic growth which – they argued – would result in poverty reduction. However, it became evident during the 1980s in many developing countries that economic growth alone would not necessarily benefit all members of a society equally. Growth was then seen by most development economists as a necessary but not sufficient condition for poverty reduction. Similarly, while improvements in access and quality of education are necessary, not all children of primary school age – in any society – will benefit equally from these improvements. It is important to also take into consideration, and measure, the characteristics of growth (i.e., the extent to which it is broad-based; the extent to which the sectors it is concentrated in are also those in which the poor are involved, such as agriculture; etc.). As shown above, the characteristics of education policies and programmes similarly will have a bearing on who and how the population benefits from the change process.

Policies intended to address social exclusion in primary education must be sufficiently flexible to allow for the implementation to be context specific. As Sayed and Soudien (2004, p.14) wrote, “approaches to educational inclusion do require a rigorous understanding of the context into which people are being excluded, the terms and conditions of the inclusion, and a preparedness to look critically at the policy-makers who set these terms and the actors who implement these policies”. Establishing basic principles and a framework is important, and clearly committing to targets, as is the case in India and Mozambique related to the inclusiveness of education, is important to promote adequate financing and also to ensure clarity in the importance of the issue. Tailoring programme interventions to the local context is necessary, recognizing the importance of local dynamics related to social exclusion as highlighted in this thesis.



## **The Role of the State and Partners**

As mentioned in the conceptual framework and also recognized in the two country analyses, a cross-cutting issue related to the public provision of primary education is the extent to which the state has the capacity to realize its obligations. As mentioned above, both the Government of India and the Government of Mozambique, but also many development organizations including for example UNICEF, advocate for the expansion of the education system, with a predominant focus on enhancing access for all children to schooling. However, as is shown above, not only will this approach result in the continued exclusion of certain children (as important dynamics which result in their exclusion will remain unaddressed), but even for those attending school, the quality of the education may actually perpetuate exclusionary beliefs and social norms (Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery, 2008). “There has as yet been a lack of systematic identification of the skills, competencies, understandings and attitudes that are needed at different levels, and within individuals playing specific roles in the education system, in order to make effective progress in mainstreaming gender and equity concerns and implementing targeted programmes” (Seel 2007, p. xvi). Currently, institutional development is often reduced to capacity-building, which is in many cases further reduced to include only training. Based on the country analyses offered in this thesis, the training of teachers in isolation will not be sufficient to address the social exclusion of children in certain contexts. A comprehensive, broader approach to institutional development is needed in order to facilitate the transformation of publicly provided education systems to effectively address social exclusion. This includes issues of incentives, attitudinal change and also empowering local bodies as discussed later in this thesis. This also once again highlights the need for further disaggregated analysis, including for example monitoring information on teachers’ background and performance related to dynamics that may result in the social exclusion of certain children.

Kabeer (2004, pp.12-13) argued that the reason for the failure of the state to meet its obligations regarding the provision of education is “the absence or weakness of institutionalized roles through which public officials responsible for making and implementing policy could be assessed on their performance by those they are supposed to serve and required to make appropriate changes in their behaviour.” The World Bank (2004) has acknowledged the importance of strengthening the relationship between ‘clients’, ‘providers’ and ‘policymakers’ as a means to promoting greater accountability. Particularly for the poor or socially excluded, increasing their participation in the management of service delivery will help them monitor and also discipline providers (World Bank, 2004). By providing incentives to service providers to provide an inclusive and effective service, and likewise disincentives for an exclusive or ineffective service, policymakers can get providers to serve socially excluded children better.

Any policy or programmatic response to addressing exclusion must be included and be consistent with the overall policy framework of the country and of the education sector. “Inclusion policies must be integrated with broader educational policy. If inclusive educational policy is located outside of the broader framework, it will constantly face problems of lack of articulation with other educational initiatives” (Sayed, 2007, p.x). This ‘bottom-up’ accountability is an important element of making services more responsive and also more accessible to excluded groups. Top-down accountability can also be an important influence for positive change. By setting standards of inclusiveness which can be measured, and service-providers at various levels being held accountable to meet these standards, incentives can be in-built within the system as a means to making the education system more inclusive. For example, rewarding those responsible for managing schools (financially or otherwise) for developing initiatives to make their school more inclusive, or recognizing community leaders from communities with all children enrolled in school, can transform the system in positive way. This however requires the development of indicators that are sensitive to social exclusion and therefore would enable incentives to be provided based on positive changes in these indicators. However, by establishing an adequate monitoring system which measures exclusion and also developing a corresponding accountability structure to facilitate action, the

community norms or school attributes which may result in the exclusion of certain children from school can be counteracted.

An overarching issue raised in this thesis related to the role and capacity of the government is the extent to which resources have been allocated to address existing disparities. This includes the extent to which the government prioritizes geographic areas which are disadvantaged, including SC-concentrated areas in India, for example, or those areas which have a particularly low education performance in Mozambique. The country analyses have shown that in both countries, the allocation of resources does not progressively allocate additional resources to particularly disadvantaged areas. In both India and Mozambique, it was noted that the expenditure patterns related to education show that poorer areas are under prioritized in the allocation of public resources. This is due to the following reasons: a relative low level of political capital of the people living in disadvantaged areas; low management capacity of government and partners in disadvantaged areas; low level of resource mobilization in poorer areas; prioritization to other sectors such as infrastructure and electricity which results in public expenditures directed towards areas that are more economically active; and proportionally high levels of expenditure on relatively higher cost services such as tertiary education which are generally located in areas that are more accessible. As discussed earlier in this thesis, one of the key principles to the human rights based approach is the universality of human rights. This principle recognizes that everyone inherently has human rights and that the State is one of the key duty-bearers to realize its obligations, within its capacity, to ensure that everyone enjoys these rights, including the right to education. Therefore, in a resource constrained environment such as in Mozambique and India, and recognizing the fundamental nature of primary education, within the human rights based approach the Government is obligated to prioritise those areas that are disadvantaged as proportionally, more children are living in these areas that are not enjoying their right to education. Furthermore, the level of the deprivation is more severe in these areas, which from a rights perspective would demand allocation of a higher level of public resources in order that children have more equitable access to a quality education and therefore, more equitably enjoy their right to education.

However, the analysis needs to go beyond disaggregating information only by geographic area. Undertaking a detailed incidence analysis of public expenditure in education, while often methodologically difficult due to the limited information available, would provide useful insights into the level of commitment to address disparities. One of the simplest forms of this analysis is to disaggregate expenditure by region and analyze whether poorer regions were allocated additional funds in order to address disparities, but broadening this analysis to include additional levels of disaggregation (such as by certain characteristics of children that traditionally can result in their exclusion), would enable a more sophisticated assessment of the extent to which the Government is proactively allocating resources to addressing social exclusion.

It must be noted that policy analysis in the area of social exclusion does not only relate to the above mentioned issues. It has political dimensions that can generate sensitivities that need to also be taken into consideration when advocating for policy change. As mentioned above during the discussion on the conceptual framework, addressing social exclusion also relates to the issue of power, and can be interpreted as attempting to challenge the status quo. It also involves confronting biases and discriminatory practices. The role of the state is critical in this regard, as it is through proactive, government intervention that current societal norms which contribute to the exclusion of children can be challenged. The capacity of the government to fulfill this role is often a key constraint, as was seen in the country analysis of Mozambique in particular. While this thesis recognized the role of factors at household, community and school level that lead to the social exclusion of children, in terms of solutions to address social exclusion, the role of the state is key in ensuring a comprehensive approach to address the causes of social exclusion. The state will need to ensure that all duty-bearers realize their obligations to address social exclusion, and that there is complementary and coordinated action between the policy-making arm of government, and the planning and implementation arm at the various levels. “Approaches to educational inclusion will need to address issues at macro, micro, personal and interpersonal levels” (Sayed and Soudien, 2003, p.17). As Kabeer (2004, p.13) noted, “Policies and programmes can be seen as one aspect of the

institutional processes, serving to maintain, reinforce or destabilize pre-existing patterns of inequality in a society and hence influence its processes of social reproduction.” It is through the school that not only barriers to access school can be addressed, but also, through the link with communities and households, exclusionary influences at these levels can also be influenced.

There is therefore a role for international organizations and institutions, including the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), to advocate for policy-making and programmatic processes to adhere to international norms and standards, including those espoused in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Although a comprehensive review of the role of international organizations in policy-making in developing countries is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is important to recognize their growing influence, both financially and through advocacy and other interactions. Mundy and Murphy (2006) recognized the growing influence of international actors in education, including non-governmental organizations, and their growing influence on the sector. From a rights-based perspective, it should be noted that with this growing influence also comes with corresponding obligations to realize the rights of children within their often impressive capacity and level of resources. Similar to the importance of national level norms and targets established by the government to realizing the rights of all children to education, the international community can play an effective role in influencing the national discourse related to children’s rights, and also supporting the strengthening of the capacity of the government to realize its obligations. However, as the country analysis of Mozambique highlighted, in countries with limited capacity but large external aid funded organizations, it is important that the interventions of all development partners are consistent with the overall national strategy to education and also lead to sustainable improvements in the capacity of the government at all levels to realize its obligations.

Both country analyses have illustrated the emphasis that the governments in India and Mozambique are placing on the supply dimension of the problem by enhancing access to schools through improved infrastructure; increasing numbers of teachers; improving the curriculum and other interventions. These are necessary components of a strategy to

improve education outcomes in developing countries, including in both Mozambique and India. Although more limited in scope and in emphasis than the supply side interventions, on the demand side, policies to make education more inclusive have focused on generating ‘demand’ through offering incentives including scholarships, food rations, learning materials to either individuals with certain characteristics (such as from a lower caste or orphans), or providing support to all children (such as providing learning materials to all children living in poor areas in Mozambique). It is important to draw a distinction between increasing the demand for education as a result of providing incentives such as learning materials or scholarships, and positively influencing the perception of the value of education by care-givers or children themselves – which results in an increase in enrolment and attendance. The latter is obviously a more fundamental change, and thereby has the potential of being more sustainable as the demand for education is not due to an external incentive, but rather due to a change in the perceived value of education. The country analyses highlighted the importance of the perception of care-givers of the value of education and how this influences the extent of social exclusion. Understanding the perceptions of care-givers of the value and quality of education should be included in qualitative research focused at the local level in order for duty-bearers to enhance demand for education.

### **Planning and Monitoring at the Local Level**

Addressing social exclusion from primary school inherently involves decentralization of certain processes to local level, including planning and monitoring interventions related to social exclusion, but also involves capacity building to ensure the school can fulfill its obligations in this regard. However, it should be noted that decentralizing decision-making to local levels, while enabling action based on local analysis, if accompanied by responsibilities for resource mobilization carries the risk of further exacerbating disparities in resource constrained environments. As Tomasevski (2006, p.10) noted, “The process of decentralization and/or localization facilitates adaptation of education for and by local communities but broadens and deepens inequalities by making the financing of education the sole responsibility of communities.” If redefining responsibilities

through a process of decentralization results in minimizing the obligations of the central government to ensure minimum standards of inclusiveness, then the disparities which exist between regions will compound social exclusion. Therefore, decentralization of decision-making should promote local involvement in the management of the primary school, including as mentioned above the monitoring of performance against key policy objectives including the overarching objective of ensuring universal access to primary education. With an adequate, decentralized and disaggregated monitoring system, this will contribute to increased levels of accountability of the duty-bearers to realize their respective obligations. As mentioned above, this should be accompanied by progressive resource allocation at the provincial and national level to ensure that disadvantaged areas receive a sufficient level of resources to address disparities. Decentralising the management of resources, including both financial, human and other resources, should be guided by the over-arching policy objective of ensuring that all children enjoy their right to education. The corresponding monitoring system, as will be discussed later in this thesis, needs to provide sufficient level of information and also sufficient opportunity for all stakeholders to participate in the analysis of progress and thereby, promote mutual accountability.

In India, the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment of the Constitution, which was enacted in 1992, delegated various powers and responsibilities to the locally elected bodies called the Panchayats, which provides a platform for strengthening a broad process to address social exclusion. Similarly, in Mozambique, significant resources and responsibilities have been delegated to districts to enable them to enhance development activities at the local level. Specifically at school level, one of the main recommendations from the review of SSA in India in 2006 was that “Greater use of Innovation Funds should be encouraged for interventions to boost the performance of first generation learners, especially SC and ST children and older girls” (Department of Education, 2006, p.5). The innovation funds are managed locally and based on an analysis of the barriers faced by children, particularly SC children, within the household, the community and in the school (and the interplays between these) (Barr et al., 2007). The ADE programme in Mozambique similarly provides resources directed to schools to be used to enhance quality and access at this

level. However, as mentioned above, in order for both initiatives to be successful, an overall policy framework and corresponding institutional mechanism needs to be put in place to ensure these local resources generate positive results in addressing social exclusion.

Similar to the political dimension of policy-making to address social exclusion, there is also a significant challenge of creating adequate incentives at local level to overcome any resistance which may exist. Resistance to change may come from teachers (e.g., by resulting in more children in class, or children who are perceived as not able to learn), parents (e.g., because of the social stigma associated with certain children, including SC children in India and orphans in Mozambique), and local leaders (e.g., if challenging these dynamics threatens the local power balance). Understanding these perspectives and biases, and developing strategies and possibly also incentives to overcome any resistance, will be necessary in any locally based process in order to challenge the status quo.

Despite on-going improvements in both Mozambique and India in the routine monitoring systems, including improvements in the level of disaggregation, monitoring issues related to social exclusion are yet to be well captured. Policies and programmes that are designed – and result in – increased enrolment and retention for all primary education should also have a positive impact on children who are socially excluded. Disaggregated data by various dimensions, including social characteristics, are critical to be able to understand the effectiveness of policies and programmes from this perspective. Overall improvements in the education system, such as was shown to be currently taking place in India and Mozambique, is a necessary but not sufficient condition to addressing social exclusion. That is, all children need sufficient facilities; a certain level of teachers' skills; community involvement; supportive supervision and other key components of an inclusive education system; but this alone will not ensure that all children benefit from the education system.

Inherent in any policy to address social exclusion in primary education must also be initiatives which are designed to raise the awareness of communities on the importance of



the issue and undertake social mobilization to counteract prevailing social norms which perpetuate exclusion. This would then create an enabling environment for a policy to be effectively implemented and also contribute to the sustainability of the results by contributing towards effecting fundamental social change. The accumulated knowledge of the impact of disparities on children must be translated into messages and examples that reach the wider public. This has been under-prioritised in both India and Mozambique. As mentioned previously, this is consistent with the overall approach in these two countries of focusing more on increasing the ‘supply’ of education and less on the ‘demand’ for education. One of the specific reasons for the lack of attention to social mobilization relating to social exclusion is the sensitive nature of the issue – which necessitates a recognition that children with certain characteristics are currently excluded from primary education. Recognizing this publicly, as was shown in the country analyses, challenges certain prevailing social norms that constrain the attendance of certain children (i.e., lower caste children in India or HIV positive children or orphans in Mozambique).

While the concept of ‘poverty’ is intuitively easy to understand – albeit with interpretations varying widely – the concept of ‘disparities’ and social exclusion is more difficult due to the relational nature of the concept, and the recognition of the multifaceted and inter-related factors which cause someone to be excluded. The concept of exclusion and the resulting disparities needs to be simplified into messages that show concretely what it means for poor and disadvantaged children. This information needs to be processed and analyzed at local level. This process has the potential of increasing the accountability of all stakeholders in the realization of the rights of children who are traditionally excluded. Without such concreteness and local involvement, the topic of ‘disparities’ will continue to be seen by the public as the domain of esoteric analysis and the reluctance to acknowledge and address the disparities by key stakeholders and duty-bearers will remain.

There have only been limited initiatives in both India and Mozambique to ensure that community management structures of the school, such as School Management

Committees or Parent Teacher's Associations, are inclusive and adequately representative of the diversity of the respective community. As shown in both country analyses, processes are often weak at local level to ensure adequate participation of key stakeholders to ensure access and quality in terms of equity and inclusion. As Seel (2007) observed, there is a "general insufficient attention to the need for good structures and processes to enable participation of primary stakeholders, particularly those most at risk of being excluded and overlooked" (p.xv). I have shown that the school is a microcosm of the community itself, particularly related to the community management structure related to the school, and it is therefore difficult – although necessary – to attempt to make community structures diverse and representative. As mentioned by UNESCO (2007),

In order to address all of the determinants of social exclusion, it is important for any intervention designed to reduce disparities to include strengthening local capacity to manage a comprehensive response. This will ensure that that approach is context-specific and addresses the local particular determinants and dynamics of exclusion which exist within a community. A rights-based approach to education necessitates that "claims holders are involved in the assessment, decision-making and implementation of education provision (UNESCO 2007, p.18).

Civil society also needs to be involved, not only by providing various forms of support to the education system, but also as a means to promoting accountability of the education system to the needs of the community.

One possible tool which can facilitate local level analysis of social exclusion is the process of developing a 'school map' with community involvement, which takes into account social as well as physical distance to school, and maps the children including some basic information on their current education status (e.g., attending or not attending, completed primary school, etc.). By facilitating communities to analyze which children are not attending school, and gain a better understanding of the reasons for their exclusion, the community level dialogue can break a certain level of silence which may prevail related to social exclusion of certain members of society. For example, by facilitating community leaders and other members to become aware of the specific challenges of children affected by HIV/AIDS, including for example those which have

lost their parents and are now living in a “child-headed household”, the specific social and other barriers to the children attending school can be addressed. An important element of such an approach is to ensure the community as a whole reaches a consensus on key targets – for example that all children from the community will graduate from primary school. It may be possible for a community to reach a consensus on a value-based statement such as this, whereas at household level there may be certain individuals who may not necessarily agree with a statement that, for example, ‘all orphans or all Dalit children should attend the same school’ as their children. Once a general target is owned by the community, then specific barriers to education can be assessed – through a participatory action research process - and the specific challenges related to individual children can also be addressed.

While there has not been research on a large scale on the extent to which guidance provided to school management committees from the government can encourage their actions to focus on ensuring inclusion, there are indications that committees, when following guidance and direction from the government to promote inclusion, can result in positive change. For example, as one strategy to promote enrolment of children in school, School Management Committees were trained in Mozambique. An evaluation of the training concluded that, following the training, the school council members were able to carry out a survey of all school-going age children in their community and for those not attending, proceeded to the person responsible for their education to better understand why the children were not attending and also encourage them to send their children to school. The evaluation also concluded that the School Management Committee was also able to provide support to the school, in the form of resolving conflicts with parents (Equipa, 2007).

The evaluation also concluded that adequate support was needed to School Management Committees in order to maximize their potential in addressing social exclusion. Support needs to be enhanced, including providing the necessary tools, to enable School Management Committees to reach and effectively communicate to households. In addition to capacity-building support to School Management Committees and providing

useful tools, the evaluation also concluded that it was important for all members of School Management Committees to be involved in the planning of school improvement plans and also participate in the monitoring of access of the children in the catchment area of the school (Equipa, 2007).

In both Mozambique and India, public resources are channeled through line ministries. While a broader discussion on the challenges and benefits of decentralization is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is important to note that for coordinated action to take place, funds should also be transferred to the local level in a coordinated manner based on the identification of needs at the local level as defined in a multisectoral plan. This would also promote shared accountability between departments as the final evaluation of the results of these common funds would be shared, but also would avoid some departments and their respective interventions being over-funded when others are under-funded. In both Mozambique and India, there were examples in which some departments were better funded than others.

Local level planning and monitoring also has the potential of promoting improved coordination between various ministries that are involved in improving quality and access to the school, as was seen in both India and Mozambique. It was shown that it is important to ensure effective linkages between the various interventions and that vertical programmes managed by either a ministry or a non-governmental organization are not implemented independently or in isolation. Coordination at district level is an important element of any programme to address social exclusion, and the role of the appropriate level of subnational government is central to this coordination. There was a clear need in both Mozambique and India to identify roles and responsibilities of each department, at national and subnational level, and to ensure that effective coordination mechanisms were in place.

Accountability between various stakeholders can be categorized in two ways: vertical and horizontal. This thesis has emphasized the importance of vertical accountability, particularly bottom-up accountability with the promotion of a greater role for the

community in the management of the school. Horizontal accountability, where various government departments are accountable to each other to fulfill their roles and responsibilities, is also an important element of accountability that can result in improved performance and also a more comprehensive approach to improving the quality of the school. As mentioned above, a comprehensive, multisectoral approach is necessary in order to effectively address social exclusion. Therefore, promoting horizontal accountability amongst the various departments is important to ensuring this comprehensive response. Developing an effective coordination mechanism based on an agreed plan which specifies the contribution of each department is a key tool in this regard. Furthermore, recognizing the benefits of coordinated action, the realization of the potential synergies between the actions of the various departments will help to instill an appreciation for coordinated action. If there are clear, shared objectives between the departments, such as through the national target setting process, in which departments will be interdependent to effectively implement their responsibilities in order to achieve their shared objective, then coordinated action would be seen to be helping each department meet its own accountability. This would be an important shift from interpreting working in partnership as an additional responsibility that does not directly relate to the work and accountability of a particular department.

At strategic points in the planning cycle, such as at the end of a five-year plan of government, carrying out an evaluation of the level of comprehensiveness of the approach and the effectiveness of each component, and the corresponding impact on the agreed target, would lead to the development of lessons learned that would serve as a useful input into the process of planning for the next cycle. Being clear from the beginning of the cycle that such an evaluation will take place would also be a further incentive to ensure effective implementation of all activities. As mentioned above, this would complement the bottom-up accountability which should be encouraged through greater involvement of the community and civil society in the management of the school.

## **Reducing the Cost of Education**

Although difficult to attribute an increase in school enrolment or attendance to specific measures, reducing the cost of education has had a positive impact in both India and Mozambique – including the specific policy of abolishing school fees. Recognizing that cost is an exclusionary influence, and because of the overlapping disadvantage status of children, the poorest also tend to have other characteristics that also result in their exclusion, eliminating a universal fee has had a positive influence on enrolment rates in both countries including the poorest and socially excluded. India abolished fees in 2002, following which enrolment continued to increase in primary school, and Mozambique similarly abolished fees in 2004 with a similar impact. While the impact of abolishing school fees is beyond the scope of this thesis, it has been repeatedly noted that one of the key barriers which excludes children from school is the cost, which disproportionately affects poor and vulnerable children. Other positive policies such as free text books or other learning materials, school uniforms, provision of mid-day meals and other provisions were also shown to positively influence the extent of social exclusion as those who are most in need will benefit most from such policies.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusions and Further Research**

This concluding chapter will summarize the key observations related to the important role of the state as a principle “duty-bearer” to ensuring the realization of all children’s right to education; the extent to which monitoring and data collection processes can sufficiently inform policy-making and planning related to addressing social exclusion in primary education; and the importance of local level information and participatory action research and related processes to enroll duty-bearers in the identification and implementation of actions to address social exclusion from primary school. Recognizing that, as shown in this thesis, addressing social exclusion requires a holistic approach that effectively responds to the local level dynamics that result in the exclusion of some children from primary school, the importance of local level, participatory action research will be highlighted. This will help to promote the enrolment of all duty-bearers in the planning and monitoring process and also facilitate the incorporation of the diverse perspectives on the extent of social exclusion; its principle causes and potential solutions.

The concept of social exclusion offers a framework to analyze and understand the reasons why some children continue to be excluded from primary school. This broader understanding has the potential to inform policy-making and programme development at various levels in order to more effectively reach children that remain excluded. I have argued above that establishing and implementing policies that proactively address social exclusion from primary education is an important human rights issue, and if effectively addressed, will also contribute to sustainable human development of the society as a whole.

Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen (1995) are amongst the most ardent proponents of the argument that elementary education is crucial to the acceleration of human development. They recognized that education has intrinsic importance in that education possesses ‘instrumental significance’. This was also described in the country analysis on India when I cited the research conducted by Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery (2008). However, in addition to the benefits derived from an inclusive education in terms of enhanced

knowledge and skills of an individual, the social recognition of participating in and graduating from a respected institution can have fundamental implications in undermining the underlying social prejudices which are an underlying cause of the social exclusion of children. However, education has the potential, as described in this thesis, of also reinforcing social norms which lead to exclusion if negative social practices are reinforced within the school itself, as was shown to be the case in some schools in both India and Mozambique.

### **The Role of the State in Addressing Social Exclusion**

The human-rights based approach, as summarized above, emphasizes the importance of the state, within its capacity, realizing its obligations to ensure that each child enjoys their right to education. The country analyses offered in this thesis noted that the policy environment in both India and Mozambique did not deliberately exclude children, but rather on the contrary, the governments in both countries repeatedly articulated their commitment to achieving universal access to primary education. However, in both countries, the persistent exclusion of certain children from primary education is partly a result of the state, at various levels, not fulfilling its respective obligations. The country analyses clearly indicated that, in addition to a clear policy level commitment to addressing social exclusion, corresponding action is also required including pro-active initiatives by all duty-bearers.

In order to fulfill the state's obligations, the country analyses indicated that a minimum level of capacity is required at all levels. At the policy level, it was clearly evident from the two country analyses that, in addition to articulating a clear commitment to realizing every child's right to education, sufficient capacity is necessary. In the case of India, the analysis suggested that significant amount of resources were allocated and resulted in improvements in the level of access to primary education (in terms of availability and the quality of infrastructure; numbers of teachers etc.), whereas in Mozambique, the low level of public resources continues to constrain access to education for all children, with disadvantaged children being most affected.



Achieving universal access to primary education requires a significant increase in financial allocations in most developing countries, including in India and Mozambique. It was very apparent that India far exceeds Mozambique in terms of the amount of resources allocated to primary education per child and also the capacity to manage the education system at all levels. However, it was also evident, based on the analysis of the two countries, that finances alone will not guarantee a high level of attendance of all children in primary school, and furthermore, will not ensure a high level of learning of excluded populations. It was also noted that the Government in India has significantly more experience in dealing with social exclusion due to the historical importance of the caste system.

One overarching issue that requires a minimum level of capacity is the effective translation of policy commitments related to social exclusion to corresponding practices and programme implementation. While the Constitution in both countries studied in this thesis guarantees the right to education of all children, and policies have outlined ambitious targets related to the access to education, the data analyzed in this thesis indicated that the level of comprehensiveness and also effectiveness of programmes does not correspond to this over-arching policy objective in either country. I have shown above that significant challenges in both countries remain, including resource and capacity constraints; a lack of a comprehensive model to address all determinants of social exclusion; inadequate processes to overcome social and personal biases; and a lack of sufficient incentives and accountability mechanisms throughout the system to ensure that duty-bearers realize their respective obligations. Socially excluded groups will continue to be left behind in terms of their access to primary education and also their performance within the system until these key constraints are addressed.

The move towards the New Aid Environment, including Sector Wide Approaches, has the potential to mobilize the international community's support to addressing social exclusion in primary education by facilitating a consistent approach of all partners to supporting the state. The shift towards Sector Wide Approaches may also lead to a

greater emphasis on issues related to equity and inclusion in primary education. As shown in the two country analyses in this thesis, the emphasis of the discourse and also the financial support of the international community in the education sector have predominantly been focused on ensuring access, quality and improved management. However, further unpacking these broader approaches to include addressing attitudinal barriers and tailored strategies to overcome barriers to the socially excluded, including specific targeting, needs to be further explored. Further research and analysis is needed to better understand the extent to which the movement towards enhanced national government ownership in the planning and management of international assistance, and the increased coherence in assistance through Sector Wide Approaches, is realizing positive change in terms of social equity in basic services, including primary education.

In order to effectively address social exclusion, duty-bearers must also have access to disaggregated information at various levels on the extent of social exclusion to enable effective policy-making and programme implementation including correction action as required.

### **Education Data Systems related to Social Exclusion**

As a contribution to the policy discussion related to social exclusion and primary education in India and Mozambique, and also to inform programming decisions, further analysis of the data at various subnational levels, including at the level of the school itself, is necessary. The World Bank (2004, p.8) wrote, “Perhaps the most powerful means of increasing the voice of poor citizens in policymaking is better information.” I have analyzed the available data from a variety of sources in order to draw the conclusion that social exclusion continues to persist in both countries, and to highlight some of the key related characteristics and dynamics. I have also shown the value of undertaking further analysis of the data, disaggregated to the extent possible, as a means of avoiding the mistake of only monitoring aggregate figures and therefore not recognizing the fact that some children continue to be excluded. In addition to illustrating the potential to gain insights related to social exclusion by further analyzing existing information, I have also highlighted the gaps in the data and recommended additional research which should be

undertaken in order to inform the relevant policy-making and planning processes. Tomasevski (2006, p.42) wrote, “the first step towards eliminating exclusion from education is to make it visible.” Unfortunately, due to the relatively weak routine monitoring systems in both countries, and in the developing world in general, disaggregated data is often lacking and therefore exclusion risks remaining invisible in education monitoring system. I showed above that it is possible to analyze the data and information that is available and identify some of the primary characteristics of children that correlate to underperformance in education. This would lead to an improved understanding of the dynamics that relate to social exclusion. The country analyses of both India and Mozambique have illustrated the potential of cross-referencing and applying regressions and other techniques in order to gain a better understanding of these dynamics. However, the data analysed in the country analyses also illustrated the limitation of the official statistics in providing sufficiently disaggregated data, both geographically and also according to characteristics of children, for the perspective of the current level of social exclusion of children from primary school. It is clear that the “official statistics” provide only aggregate level of information, which based on further analyses sheds light on the extent to which children are excluded and the characteristics of these children, but the limited availability of disaggregated information, coupled with limited capacity to analyse and use the information, makes it difficult to develop and manage policy and programmatic responses to effectively address the social exclusion of children from school.

Recognizing the importance of disaggregated information by characteristics that relate to social exclusion (which are different in various contexts), and also the importance of disaggregating the information by lower geographical units to enhance the transparency and accountability of duty-bearers at all these levels, the education system’s routine monitoring in both countries needs to be strengthened. In order to verify the information from the routine information, periodic surveys that have sufficient sample sizes to enable disaggregation by relevant characteristic and also subnational levels, is also necessary to an analysis of trends related to social exclusion.

To enable monitoring of progress and accountability of all duty-bearers, the targets and indicators also need to be specific in their level of disaggregation. Currently, in both India and Mozambique, although a disaggregated analysis of the extent of social exclusion was completed and presented in this thesis, the routine education monitoring systems, and also large-scale surveys, need to be strengthened in order to sufficiently understand the dynamics related to social exclusion in the various regions in each country. Governments and their partners should also ensure that large-scale surveys related to education collect information on the social characteristics of children, and have an adequate sample size to enable a disaggregated analysis related to the social exclusion of children. Further analysis of survey data, using regressions to control for characteristics such as poverty rates or education levels of the head of the household, can provide important insights into other characteristics which may be negatively affect the education status of children, including for example the influence of caste or of being an orphan.

Many developing countries face the constraint of having only a limited amount of reliable information. As Tomasevski (2006, p.11) pointed out, “Inequalities are hidden behind education statistics, which operate with averages and camouflage gender, racial, ethnic, linguistic or religious fault-lines.” This can be seen at the national and international level, and also at the local level, which can have the affect of constraining action. As Tomasevski (2006, p.11) wrote, “Because racial or religious profile of education is neither formally recorded nor statistically monitored, it does not inform education strategies and discrimination continues unchallenged. Challenges falter because of the absence of statistical evidence”. In both India and Mozambique, there are significant discrepancies between official data from education monitoring and information systems and the data from household surveys, which is predominantly due to systemic weaknesses in the routine information collection systems. Although this thesis has shown that further analysis of existing data can reveal patterns of social exclusion from primary education, it was also very apparent that monitoring systems that systematically reveal exclusionary processes and highlight gaps in the realization of obligations would be a key component to addressing social exclusion. In order to understand and therefore effectively address discriminatory practices related to access to quality primary education

for all children, I have shown above that a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data is needed to capture governmental commitments and efforts, as well as the obstacles and related processes to education for children.

One of the key features of an effective monitoring system is the identification of sensitive and measurable indicators, which are policy-relevant, user-friendly, technically sound and feasible at a reasonable cost (Huebler, 2008). The lack of accurate, disaggregated data limits the possibility of monitoring the effectiveness of the state-led interventions in particular to ensuring children have access to quality education. It also inhibits various stakeholders from applying pressure on the duty-bearers, including for example on the various levels of government, as the evidence of continued exclusion, particularly of multiply-vulnerable children as discussed in both country analyses, is not readily available.

An area for further work related to the analysis of data is to explore the potential of 'parity indices' such as a social exclusion index, which, based on various characteristics, compares educational status of children. "A meaningful disparity index should be based on differences in participation by groups that are favoured or excluded from the education system" (Huebler, 2008, p.9). The Gender Parity Index, which is a ratio of the female and male primary school net attendance rate, is an example of such an index which helps to highlight the difference between boys and girls in school enrolment. An easy-to-understand index which summarizes the extent of social exclusion and compares and contrasts various regions would be an important contribution to the policy-making and programming related dialogue on this issue.

A similar approach could also be explored to measure the state's commitment to addressing social exclusion. In order to explain the continued social exclusion of certain children from primary education, further analysis of the extent to which public resources are allocated within the education system would be very useful. This could include an analysis of the incidence of expenditure by various characteristics of children. Currently the extent of this analysis is often limited to the categorization of households by wealth

quintile, which then normally concludes that wealthier children receive disproportionately higher amount of public resources in education often because they proceed farther in school and therefore realize the benefits from the funding provided to higher grades. However, further research and analysis should be undertaken to measure the expenditure per student disaggregated by certain social characteristics which, within a given context, are related to exclusion (as seen in the two country analyses in this thesis).

Further to the discussion regarding the importance of community participation and involvement of civil society in the education system, it must be noted that in order for this local involvement to be fully effective, there is a need for a transparent monitoring and information system. Currently, in both Mozambique and India, and a common characteristic in most developing countries, monitoring systems fail to disaggregate sufficiently to enable a comprehensive understanding of which children are being excluded and the related dynamics at the local level. Seel (2007) observed that there is a limited understanding of ‘patterns of educational disparity’ in developing countries. “Analyses often fail to be multidimensional and to relate one factor to another. There continues to be less attention to gender than to poverty, and still less attention to other forms of social exclusion” (Seel, 2007, p.10).

Children and their communities need to be actively engaged as partners and involved in the monitoring and analysis of information related to the accessibility and quality of primary education, and more specifically, the forms and extent of social exclusion. Students, parents, teachers and community leaders all have information needs related to the performance of the education system. “The Children’s Rights agenda has shaped child research by fostering a realization that children and young people have a right to be consulted, heard and to appropriately influence the services and facilities that are provided for them” (Darbyshire et al., 2005, p. 420). An information system needs to therefore be established which transparently provides the information to each of these key stakeholders in a timely manner. From a rights-based perspective, this is important for rights-holders to effectively demand their rights from the duty-bearers, and also for duty-bearers themselves to be aware of the extent to which they are realizing their obligations.

The data need to include both quantitative and qualitative information which is disaggregated in order to assess the extent some children are excluded and the related processes which are causing their exclusion. The qualitative data can help to illuminate issues such as the extent of the improvement of learning in schools, and also the level of interaction between teachers and various children.

As mentioned above, the process of collecting the data should be as participatory as possible in order to promote the involvement of children, parents, teachers and community leaders in the monitoring of the performance of the education system. Involving children in the collection of data and the monitoring system more generally will provide a more comprehensive and accurate perspective. As Crivello et al. (2008, p. 52) wrote “Capturing children’s ‘standpoints’ in contexts of poverty is also respectful of their diversities and their capacities to think, feel, and aspire beyond ‘survival’. This is not to underestimate the difficulties children face, but instead promotes a holistic view of their experiences of both wellbeing and adversity that could be used to inform more effective and integrated interventions.” Involving communities in the monitoring of key processes and results will also enable them to be involved in developing solutions to overcome barriers to access in their local context. This is also consistent with the human rights based approach, which as mentioned in the introduction, emphasizes a participatory approach which enables all stakeholders to participate in both the analysis of the situation (i.e., which children are excluded from school and why) and also engaged in process of addressing the barriers to access for some children.

This local participation must of course be within the parameters of a common commitment to promoting access to education for all. That is, the involvement of the community should facilitate the identification of solutions to barriers and not, as mentioned above, bring in biases which may be prevalent within a community and could lead to further exclusion. A participatory approach to data collection and analysis should be based on a recognition that, as discussed in both country analyses, the social position of an individual influences their perception of the accessibility of the education system. As Fattore et al. (2007, p. 27) wrote, “people see or view things differently depending on

where they are situated structurally in society”. As summarized in this thesis, the human rights based approach recognizes the importance of participatory approaches and involving rights holders in the analysis process. While a detailed review of the various methodologies to enable this participation is beyond the scope of this thesis, it should be noted that, as a result of the children’s rights movement, “researchers have been developing inclusive and participatory children centered methodologies, which place the voices of children, as social actors, at the centre of the research process” (Ben-Arieh, 2005, p.580).

Policies intended to accelerate progress towards primary education should not be based on abstract concepts or simplistic generalizations but rather should be based on a sound analysis of the data and evaluation of effectiveness of previous or existing interventions. Furthermore, the policy-making and programmatic response should be informed by an analysis of disaggregated data which distinguishes between various characteristics of children as the challenge of social exclusion takes many forms which can only be understood through disaggregated data. Some accusations that certain policies are ideologically biased may be misdirected; it may instead be because such stances derive from differences in the level of aggregation of the analysis. Programmes and policies which are based on aggregate data may be falling into the trap of ‘misplaced concreteness’ – whereby conclusions are drawn on the basis of deductions from abstractions rather than on the basis of direct observations. A disaggregated approach to analyzing data related to the effectiveness of policies and programmes is therefore necessary when one recognizes the differences in the reality of each socially excluded children from primary education.

### **Action Research at Local Level**

In addition to an enhanced education monitoring system that is capable of deducing trends related to social exclusion in primary education, action research at local level would also be an important component of addressing this issue. As Sayed and Soudien (2003, p.17) wrote, “education inclusion requires care consideration of every aspect of



schooling and the social context in which it finds itself.” Vertical approaches that only address one element of exclusion have been shown to have limited success (Barr et al., 2007). Therefore, there is a need for a comprehensive approach that simultaneously addresses all the barriers to access for each socially excluded child, within a broader, enabling policy environment. This will therefore need context-specific analysis and action, which is only possible through a local level process.

There are a multitude of methodologies which would effectively promote the participation of stakeholders in the analysis of the situation and enroll them in the solution process. Inherent to the recognition of the importance of context specific analysis, the specific methodology adopted would depend on the specific question being asked and also the context of the school, community and country more broadly. However, the commonality which I argue is key to addressing social exclusion is to ensure the involvement of the local stakeholders in both the analysis and also in the development of the solution. As Cornwall and Jewkes (1995, p.1667) wrote “Breaking the linear mould of conventional research, participatory research focuses on a process of sequential reflection and action, carried out with and by local people rather than on them. Local knowledge and perspectives are not only acknowledged but form the basis for research and planning. Many of the methods used in participatory research are drawn from mainstream disciplines and conventional research itself involves varying degrees of participation. The key difference between participatory and conventional methodologies lies in the location of power in the research process.” A specific way forward for research that will contribute to the discussion of social exclusion would be to undertake case studies of particular schools or districts that have effectively overcome social exclusion of certain children. Through further analysis of the available quantitative information on the status of education indicators at local levels, it would be possible to identify particular districts or communities and schools that are positive examples in this regard (i.e., areas that have traditionally excluded populations but have achieved high levels of education status of children from these groups). As mentioned above, the data is limited in both India and Mozambique, but with further analysis of the data as presented in this thesis, it is possible to identify areas that would be possible candidates for action research at the

local level. In order to have a sufficiently comprehensive and sensitive perspective to the dynamics summarized in this thesis, action research should be participatory – involving communities in a process of reflection that is inclusive of the various perspectives and undertakes a comprehensive review of the relevant dynamics. To the extent possible and through the use of various innovative participatory data collection methodologies, children should also be involved in the process of collecting data and also analyzing the extent of social exclusion, its causes and possible solutions. As Ben-Arieh (2005, p.581) emphasized, “the studies design process must be rooted in the experience of all children including children of minority and disadvantaged groups.” Ensuing adequate participation of all, particularly those traditionally excluded, in a process of reflection would be important in order to ensure a comprehensive level of understanding. While in general the quantitative information from surveys, with further analysis as shown in this thesis, can provide an indication of the children that are being excluded from primary education, participatory qualitative approaches are necessary in order to understand why children are being excluded. As mentioned above, answering this question would be context – and in some cases – child-specific. One of the challenges in undertaking participatory methodologies would be to be sensitive to the unique characteristics of the local context, but also ensure that the information can be used to inform policy-making and programme planning at various levels, including national level. Developing the specific methodology, sample size and other variables will be dependent on the context in each country.

Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery (2008) carried out intensive research of the education system of a district in India, and illustrated the importance of understanding local level dynamics and also the difference in the perspectives of various stakeholders. The study also emphasized the fact that researchers speak the language of the community, and facilitate a process that is able to distinguish often subtle social dynamics. This could be a significant hurdle to overcome for a researcher from outside the community, and foreign researchers in particular. Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery, (2008, p.28) lived and researched communities in Northern India over a span of more than twenty years and observed the importance of being to converse in the local language, “in addition to speaking Hindi,

during the course of research we became better able to incorporate local idioms into our speech. Our capacity to demonstrate familiarity in Hindi with ideas imagined as ‘local’ allowed us to draw attention away from our position as ‘foreign educated visitors,’ at least in some instances and for some time.” It should be noted that a participatory process which is inclusive at the local level would not only contribute to an improved understanding of the context-specific dynamics related to social exclusion and therefore inform programming and planning, the process in itself, by facilitating participation, would be a contribution to promoting a more inclusive environment.

Recognizing the importance of the local context, one must exercise caution when generalizing or transferring good practices in programmes and policies from one country to another. However, gaining a better understanding of how some schools and communities have managed to overcome social exclusion, although context specific, would provide useful lessons learned and insights for other schools and regions. The preoccupation of the failure of the state to provide an inclusive service should be counter-balanced with an analysis of those schools which are promoting inclusive education. There may be as much or more to learn from where schools are inclusive as from an analysis of where they are not. This may be particularly the case if one is to find the structural and systemic conditions between schools are similar, but one school, or a particular teacher, is proactively addressing social exclusion while the vast majority of the schools or teachers within schools continue to practice behaviours that are exclusionary. Analyzing the specific reasons why one school or teacher is a “positive deviant” in terms of addressing social exclusion would shed an enormous amount of light on this topic. This is an area for further research.

Jeffrey, Jeffery and Jeffery (2008, p.210) concluded “education is a contradictory resource: opening up certain opportunities to undermine established structures of power while also often drawing marginalized young people more tightly into structures and ideologies of dominance”. It is important to better understand how education can play a role in undermining social exclusion and to examine precisely how ‘empowerment’ occurs in each context. However, this must also be based on the recognition of the role of

certain schools and school systems in reproducing inequality and reinforcing discriminatory practices. This should also be understood within the broader social context within which the educational system operates. Based on in-depth case studies of individuals and communities, and placing this into the national policy context and a broader analysis of trends, planning and policy-making processes can be better informed to address social exclusion from primary education in developing countries. The main objective must be to initiate and facilitate socially and culturally sensitive approaches at the national and sub-national levels that are grounded in the reality of individual children that continue to be excluded from primary education, and therefore lead to the transformation of education systems.

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